

Maclean's

Canada's

Weekly Newsmagazine

December 17, 2001 \$4.50

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Ron Graham on what Sept. 11
taught us about our mortality

Jonathon Gatehouse on Ramadan in Egypt

Barbara Wickens on how our
spiritual lives have changed

FAITH UNDER FIRE

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51



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34 New York love-in In early December, Christians descended on the Big Apple for a special weekend. *Macleans's* Ottawa Bureau Chief John Geddes went along for the ride.

44 Lords of the ring Hollywood's heavyweight contenders, from a Muslim boxer to a bobbit crusader, square off for the Christmas box office.



Four thousand people joined for Macleans's photography by Peter Steinhilber (page 34) and John Geddes (page 34). The photo of the Christmas tree was taken by Peter Steinhilber. The photo of the Christmas tree was taken by Peter Steinhilber. The photo of the Christmas tree was taken by Peter Steinhilber.



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From the Editor

Faith for ever after—or no more

When I was a kid, the Quebec school system was set up so as to keep children from different religious upstarts from each other: it was only partly successful. As an Anglican, I went to a different school than my Irish-Catholic pals down the street. But because the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, unlike the Catholic board, accepted children of many other faiths, I was often one of the few WASPs in my class. The majority of students were Jewish. So I would occasionally spend Friday nights with friends in Catholic church basements, listening to priests leading sing-alongs, and then be off to synagogue the next day to attend a schoolmate's bar mitzvah.

Those experiences served as my introduction to the realisation that religion can both unite and divide. I was welcomed in two houses of worship that weren't my own—but my Catholic and Jewish friends, who didn't have much chance on intermingling, regarded each other with suspicion when they did meet. Eventually they came together, fuelled by shared fondness for things like weekend street hockey.

We've had occasion to think about religion, and religious differences, since Sept. 11. It's tempting to paper over disagreements with comforting clichés, such as the notion that we all worship the same God, whenever we call Him. But it's a mistake to ignore differences. As the Canada-born intellectual Michael Ignatieff notes, the separation of church and state is strictly a Western concept. In most Muslim countries, the rule of law and tenets of Islam are intertwined. Our differences range from such basic individual practices as the manner by which we worship to much grander

social concerns, such as the way we view relationships between men and women.

Our cover package that week continues the effect: the events of Sept. 11 have had in spiritual ways and otherwise. Award-winning author Ron Givens, whose books have explored everything from politics to the French-English divide to the place of religion in society, looks at the ways we approach and sometimes reject spirituality. Barbara Wickham, who oversees our Canada section, mulls the way we have changed habits and ways of thinking since Sept. 11. And our



Gatehouse on assignment

newly minted National Affairs Correspondent, Jonathan Gatehouse, reports on his findings over a week spent in Egypt during Ramadan, the Islamic holy month.

Because Canada is such a multicultural society, it's easy to forget that much of the rest of the world is not. Robert Purnan, a Harvard University professor, moral observer and author, observed last week that ethnic diversity, along with its advantages, can bring problems, including greater mistrust and fewer natural links among a country's people. His conclusion: governments need to make much greater efforts to build "new forms of connectedness" between otherwise diverse groups. That's an important conclusion that governments should obviously heed, but it's hardly a new idea. For one, as my group learned long ago, when churches and synagogues don't do the trick, connectedness can come from a good game of street hockey.

Andy Weil-Holt

respond@maclean.ca to comment on From the Editor

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NORTON

THE
SCORE
IS
"A TOP-DRAWER
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THAT
RATCHETS UP
THE TENSION
INCH BY
CAREFUL
INCH."

— KENNETH TURAN, LOS ANGELES TIMES



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The business of sex

This article just broke my heart—so many women betrayed with false promises of a better life in Canada ("Inside the sex trade," *Globe*, Dec. 3). I love my country and it saddens me that for these women Canada is a place of fear, abuse and hopelessness. I'm glad the RCMP and the federal government are doing what they can to get an end to this crime.

Larry Mills, Vancouver

If the world's oldest profession were legislated, regulated and untaxed, the organized crime aspect would disappear. We should stop seeing this issue as a criminal justice problem and start seeing it through the public-health lens. With that perceptual shift, we would adopt a harm-reduction approach, the women would be empowered and the criminal world would be deprived of the financial benefit.

Mark Nelson, Vancouver

I am a certified massage therapist and, as my business, we try hard to educate the public about the non-sexual nature of our profession. I wish you could have used a different setting than a massage parlour to make the point on your cover. Pictures like this do nothing to encourage people to talk to their doctors about massage for fear of

looking like a pervert. When I am asked what I do for a living, I have to be careful how I answer so people understand that I am not involved in the sex trade. When applying for a business licence, I need to prove my legitimacy or risk being categorized with the escort agencies. I would like to see national standards in place for massage therapy, and the places that do not

comply should be closed. I am shocked that the police seem to be able to do nothing about known establishments here in Kelowna that even advertise.

Carson Williams, Kelowna, B.C.

"Inside the sex trade" is an example of basic economics. Demand triggers supply. But here supply involves slaves and women who cannot fight back. Who is really to blame? If this was cigarettes or alcohol, the government would have legislation to stop the abuse, but not for the slave trade. It is about time government protected the older profession and closed out the pimps. If not, the middlemen will continue to supply the market and walk to the bank.

Burton Wilson, Kelowna, B.C.

We would already have stopped this degrading situation if allowed to, but our so-called justice system is failing us all. Pedophiles are released into society despite the fact they are still dangerous, sex criminals have access to pornographic movies inside prison walls, police officers are afraid of acting to protect society due to all the guarantees of individual rights, and on and on, all in the name of defending human rights. It is time to liberate ourselves from a political system that is protecting this marvellous society of ours.

Charles Beck, Vancouver

When *Globe* attorney Calvin Barry complains of light sentences being handed out to traffickers in the sex trade, it is hard not to wonder about the attitudes that underlie much of Canadian life. The fact is, women's bodies are sold every day on the covers of magazines. While living in

Canadian wanna-be

I just took the quiz on being Canadian ("Immigrant: No wait. Soiree John," *Overton*, Nov. 26) and must admit I didn't do very well. This disappoints me, as I thought I was a very good candidate to become a Canadian. I believe in big government with lots of social programs. I think it is a clear sign of a superior society when cars stop to let pedestrians pass. I enjoy sex. I'm an anglophile. And I could easily become addicted to Tim Hortons doughnuts and coffee. Gosh! At least be an honorary Canadian!

Joan Blackwood, Cottage Lake

London, Ont., I came across a billboard advertising "Mazuga and 2 a m," boldly displayed on a well-travelled road, complete with phone number. One got the impression that physiotherapy wasn't the objective. Couldn't it be that the sex trade is simply working out a pervasive Canadian attitude, one that is sometimes expressed subtly and other times, not?

Neil Bullock, Ottawa, B.C.

Praising Shania

Your article on Shania Twain's early recordings ("A blast from the past," *Overton*, Dec. 3) was written with all the hubris of one who once has started winning major literary awards from the moment he was able to arrange letters into words. For most of us, life is anything but static, and what we think, say or do at the age of 24 rarely defines all we are ever capable of accomplishing. If, for one, commend Twain on her continued creative growth, on successfully separating her private life from her public persona, and for her ability to outlast those who would try to cash in on her fame by releasing a CD of old recordings, or by those who insist on dredging up some old news.

Leanne Hartig, Kootenai, B.C.

Outstanding officer

Your article on Staff Sgt. Bob Senhouse was much appreciated in this house ("Undercover Moose," *Globe*, Nov. 26). We've known Bob since 1994, when then-Cpl. Senhouse was responsible for the undercover operation that led to the arrest

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and conviction of the two men who murdered our son. The guilty verdict was due, for the most part, to Bob's intuitiveness, tenacity and uncompromising passion for justice. As an undercover cop, Bob put his life on the line in the cause of justice and on behalf of victims like our son. Now, his high standards have put his reputation at risk. To a man of real integrity, there is no compromise possible when it comes to right and wrong.

Doreen Langford, Victoria

In cahoots with Saddam

The perception that the United States is in league with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is not "baseless" when considered in light of some basic facts about the Gulf War ("Is Saddam sane?" World, Dec. 3). When George Bush Sr. encouraged Iraqi northern Kurds (and promised aid) to repel Saddam's bloody regime in the aftermath of the U.S.-led campaign, a different scenario quickly unfolded. When the Kurds were actually capable of achieving their objective, Bush suddenly declared that the U.S. did not intervene in foreign affairs and withheld all assistance to the anti-Saddam movement.

St. J. Joseph, Victoria

I have always maintained that Saddam Hussein is an inmate in the CIA, at the world's foremost bad guy. Every time the U.S. ignores a beguiling, the CIA runs our Saddam to rattle his allies. Can there be any other reason why he has outlasted two American administrations?

Michael McInnes, Victoria

Bushes Anisid captures Saddam: Hussein, in power, to have a cut in your room ("This time, let's finish the war," Dec. 3). Anisid doesn't quite understand the situation. The Iraqis are not averse to having your room, courtesy of you. If the U.S. kills bin Laden, as Anisid urges, there will be no shortage of men to take his place. Besides, invading Iraq would probably turn the whole Muslim world against the U.S. and its allies.

William Redford, Toronto

What to do with the Arabs, as Anisid puts it? Well, for starters, it seems right and just that the Palestinian Arabs should have their own state in Palestine. This was



Accolades and tears for 'the quiet Beatle'

granted by the British in 1917 in exchange for the Arabs joining forces with them to oust the Turks who had ruled the region for 400 years. The British, who controlled the region for the next 30 years, had the opportunity to follow through on their promise, but it never happened. Since 1948, the Arabs and Jews continue to be at each other's throats. So, Afghanistan is just a diversion in the real problem. Get Osama bin Laden, kill some Taliban in the process and get our old enemies into power. Sorry, but this will not work. Even if bin Laden is captured alive or found dead, and if Saddam Hussein should suffer a similar fate, this won't solve the underlying problem of Arab hatred in Palestine. Since Sept. 11, both British Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. President George W. Bush have indicated that Arab hatred for the Palestinian Arabs is a priority, so they must think that there is some kind of connection here to the tragedy that occurred on that date.

A. M. Walsh, Greater Tel.

Missing George

The accolades and the tears will flow for the passing of George Harrison, "The Quiet Beatle" (Appreciation, Dec. 10), who was not just a member of the greatest musical group most will ever hear, but a man who helped define a decade. Future generations of music lovers will discover the wonder of Harrison's evolution from Beatlemania to a life of love and family. We can always take solace in his own words that "all things must pass." We

may have lost an icon, but heaven was just graced with one consummate musician and human being.

Dan Rowland, Toronto

Canadians of note

I'd like to nominate John O'Leary for the Marston Honour Roll to be published in next week's issue. John has been a literacy advocate his entire life. He works with volunteers, governments, universities and corporations towards a single goal: to fight poverty through knowledge and learning. As president of the national literacy organization Frontier College, John brings literacy to the forefront of Canadian society and to Canada's most disadvantaged citizens.

Catherine Rodde, Toronto

I propose Meg Eickling of Vancouver for your Honour Roll. I feel she merits such recognition because of her diverse volunteer and professional work in the health, faith and education communities. Without the advantage of a large institution or organization elicited her (much less regular salary benefits at a pension plan), Meg has helped and influenced tens of thousands of people in B.C. and across the country. Her unique teaching style is firm and her work in sexual health care is relevant and important. She was a pioneer in the field and continues to be more. Meg is now retiring after more than 25 years helping families. Among other honours, she has received the Nursing Award of Excellence from her fellow RNs in B.C. in recognition of her tremendous, positive impact on our society.

Alice L. Bell, North Vancouver, B.C.

My nomination for one, if not all 12, Marston Roll spots is for the people of Canada. No one made a more significant contribution to promote fair who we are than those who without hesitation opened up their homes to strangers from around the world on Sept. 11. I need to offer my love within three hours of the plane landing. I was too late, and all I could feel was pride. The generous charitable effort and continued support of this struggle notwithstanding, the simple gift of a bed and a warm meal will never be forgotten by the recipients. Now they know just what being Canadian is all about.

Paul MacIsaac, Surrey, B.C.



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The Mail

Higher learning

You ask "Where are the professors?" ("Choosing the right university, an insider's guide," *Universities* 2001/Concert, Nov. 19). They are probably with the absent physicists, nurses and teachers, doing their part time or leaving the country. The question I would like to ask is, where have the funds gone to hire these professionals? The answer, I believe, is into the coffers of the private sector and the wealthy University presidents. Like hospital CEOs, are they paid largely because of their compatibility with the business community, which is represented on the boards of directors and boards of governors of universities and hospitals. The marriage between big business and government in Canada is such that, in most cases, government labels funding to be used solely for capital expenditures. The money has been spent for building buildings, parking lots, stadiums, dormitories, student community centres, research parks, costly technological equipment, furniture and, while these facilities and goods are desirable, they are, in many cases, unnecessary. The costs to the academic community—i.e., not hiring professors, dual salaries of \$300, \$500 and 1,000, coming of valiant programs—have been great.

David E. Plach, Wellesley, Ont.

Thank you for once again diverting readers away from one of Canada's best-kept secrets. In referring, of course, to the excellent colleges across this country. By funneling dollars and wandering towards universities, you keep our colleges safe for committed students who actually want to develop job skills in worthwhile (often less-glamorous) careers. This country is in dire need of midpeople and technicians. Is a lawyer or health-care worker we need in an increasingly aging and unhealthy community?

M. B. Buckheit, London Ont.

Twenty-five years ago I had the good fortune to graduate with an honours B.Sc. in mathematics from the University of Windsor. Twenty years of university teaching have made me realize that the undergraduate math program at Windsor then was as good as any in North America, and much better than most. Along

the way, I had Alice MacLeod for a freshman English class, my wife studied freshman English with Joyce Carol Oates. When I hear of "town and gown" disputes between universities and the surrounding communities, I think of the open-house weekends at Windsor when the community came to see what was going on at their university. When your magazine reports that the University of Windsor has the worst reputation among comprehensive universities, I think that you've been along the wrong people.

Brockley Lucier, West Lafayette, Ind.

You tell us that students at the University of Ottawa enjoy learning to tolerate the *Raiders* like kid on the campus radio station CKCU-FM ("Campus confidential," Nov. 19). However, as an alumna of Canada's oldest FM campus station, I mean inform you that CKCU is across town at Carleton University, once a boozing ground for some of this country's better journalists. The U of Ottawa uses the call letters CHUO-FM.

Paul Park, Ottawa

I have a 45-minute commute to the University of Windsor every day from out of town so I am very well aware of the parking situation here. Yes, people do line up for hours in the rain the day the 2001-2002 parking passes were on sale, in my case, but I know also why I bought my parking pass over a week later and they still had plenty left.

Tania Kopke, Tilbury, Ont.

Think ahead

There isn't one major North American carrier that is in any different situation from Air Canada. They have all squandered their adversity trying to break their competitors' backs. Globally, if anything, the situation is worse. Southwest, Sabena, Airwest, City Jet and others are gone. CEOs and vice-presidents are scrambling for the usual lessons of cutting expenses and dumping staff. I would suggest that a winning solution lies more in true leadership from senior airline management and government. Plan before the next quarter's balance sheet for a start and do it before you have fired all your pilots.

Daniel M. Holmes, Philadelphia, Pa.



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ASTONISH YOURSELF

I defer to you, Father

Recently I happened to pick up the autobiography of a Benedictine monk. I recognized an author as a man whom I had known long ago. As I read his story, I made a discovery about which I felt quite embarrassed, in view of my own adolescent inexperience with the man. The book, *A Rebel from Abbo*, caused me to think back to those years, now several decades past, when I was a hopeful young aspirant in the large Westminster Abbey in Mission, B.C., where Father Bede was one of the assistant monks. From my very first day, Father Bede seemed to stand out among the black-robed monks as a man of striking character and arresting appearance. Although elderly he had a tough John Wayne angularity, but the physical hardness contrasted with an aura of gentleness and, so far as an 18-year-old novice like myself could judge, of spirituality.

During my first year of study in that large quiet community, my path rarely crossed that of the tall, old ascetic. I would see him sometimes meditating silently in a shadowy corner of the monastic church and other times shifting large boulders in the farm fields with the ease of an athletic youth. In my second year, I was assigned to an academic class taught by Father Bede. That this austere silent man taught the monastery's course in public speaking was a surprise, but I found that he knew all of the modern techniques of presentation. He appeared to derive his knowledge from some area of complicated personal experience. I quickly noticed something else, the rather grim, square-jawed sternness of the monk's expression was counterbalanced by a ripple of wistful humor that almost continually flickered in his eyes. Before many hours of the public speaking course had passed, I developed an unguessed liking for Father Bede. I was a somewhat untested student within the monastic community, still very much involved in my lessons in the outside world, unfolding a fascination with electronics and physics. Yet the striking simple goodness of his monk appeared to me and confirmed my decision to be in that place.

"You needn't overconcern yourself with those things," he once quietly advised, regarding my frequent chatter about microelectronics or the new application of robotics in sport. "This [the monastic] world of our day-to-day life here is enough, just now." One of his classroom assignments, however, seemed to offer me a chance to expand on my own enthusiasm—delivering a three-minute, unprepared presentation on any topic of my choice. I stood and spoke fluently about a possible new development in laser-cut technology. Having recently read a paper on the subject in a



popular engineering magazine, I felt I had the facts at my fingertips. While my fellow students chuckled skeptically, Father Bede listened with a sort of deep concentration. When I finished, he commented: "That was good. You strung together more facts and made a case for your point of view."

I glowed with pride. "I think, however," he added quietly, "that your argument about this development is based on a bit of sound engineering." He continued with a sentence or two about thermodynamics and ground effect pressures that I didn't fully comprehend. Genuinely, confidently,

I defended my own understanding of the facts as I had read them in *Popular Mechanics*. "In matters of theology and of the monastic life, I defer to you, Father. But actually, I do know something of science. Before coming to the monastery, I did very well indeed at high school physics." The smile that he turned toward me was genuinely kind. He was a tough but refreshingly unaffronted monk, and I was a precocious youth soon destined to leave the monastery in search of a life where I might explore my potential.

It was not until 30 years later that I discovered *A Rebel from Abbo* and finally learned something more about Father Bede. The autobiography told the story of Keryon Reynolds, a man whose first 50 years had encompassed a career as one of the most distinguished engineers of his generation. A natural public expression person that he developed, he earned the basis of an industrial corporation that earned Reynolds a multi-million-dollar fortune. When his long and happy marriage ended with the death of his wife, Philip Reynolds' life took a radical turn after going away the whole of his personal wealth and devoting the shores of his corporation among its employees, he entered the Benedictine order as a simple monk. He took Bede as his name within that religious community.

As I turned the pages of his book, the darkness dawned on me—it had been the distinguished scientist and engineer, Keryon Reynolds, to whom I had made my adolescent boast about the superiority of my high school knowledge of physics over a doctored monk's probable experience of the subject. Fused into, I read further, coming eventually to a statement that delivered the coup de grace to my pride. As a seminar—a more or less routine function of his career—Father Bede had on beside Albert Einstein

Philip Teece of Victoria is a recently retired librarian and the author of *A Shimmer on the Horizon*.

The Week That Was



Chloe has only specialists at the beds to her son in hospital

Victorian rocked by latest brutal beating at hands of teens

A 16-year-old Roma Vik died after she was attacked by a group of teenagers boys and girls. Three people have been charged with aggravated assault in connection with Adrienne's beating. One of the accused, a teenager who is not named under the Young Offenders Act, is the brother of one of the six teenagers involved in beating Vik to death. Police have launched 11 other investigations related to a group of up to 40

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people affiliated with the gang that attacked Adrienne. They say the youths model themselves after a Los Angeles gang, the Crips, which seems like businessmen their rivals, the Bloods, wear red. Adrienne was wearing a new red coat when he was beaten, which police believe may have triggered the assault. "I feel pretty that I gave her the money for the jacket," said Chloe. "I keep asking myself, 'What if that was?'"

Links to Green River?

Investigators from a police task force in Vancouver, which spent 45 weeks involved in prosecution, are believed to have been alerted to the 1984, will travel to Seattle to discuss possible links to the notorious Green River serial killings of some 49 women. Her decision came after authorities charged Gary Leon Ridgway, a 52-year-old Seattle man, with murder in the deaths of four women. The Green River case, regarded as the worst unsolved serial killings in U.S. history, has baffled investigators since 1982, when

they began finding women's bodies in the Green River, south of Seattle.

Land and sanctions

And ending environmental opposition to Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe's administration

Mugabe's troubled regime



the African country's reconstituted Supreme Court ruled that the seizure of white-owned farms by blacks is legal. As part of a land reform program, Mugabe allowed landless blacks to take over the farms in the last two years. The occupations turned violent and tens of black farmhouses assaulted and thousands displaced, forcing that Mugabe is now rapping elections set for the spring, the U.S. Congress wants the White House to exact sanctions against the president, including freezing foreign assets belonging to his family.

Gener goes away

"It" said the e-mail subject line that my Microsoft Windows user who clicked on the attachment—happened a screen saver—got a nasty shock. The so-called Gener was deleted option files wiped out and virus programs and, if arrived via Microsoft's Outlook e-mail program, sent mail to everyone in the address book. Even so, computer users said Gener's damage was far less widespread than it is of last year's notorious Love Bug. Because users today are more wary and more companies back quick action

NATO hugs a bear

Russia and NATO agreed to fight an alliance that Russian President Vladimir Putin called "an alliance" NATO. It states just short of bringing NATO's Cold War mission into the fold. Instead, a new cause will be formed to work out joint action on issues ranging from civil emergencies to missile defense. Secretary General Lord Robertson said NATO's 15 member nations also want to take advantage of Moscow's co-operation in the fight against terrorism.

Flying too high

Ontario is determined to reduce air Canada's dominance of the air travel market, says Transport Minister Gordon Solonchuk. "We don't like all this options," he told reporters outside a Senate transport committee hearing. He included as possibilities: regulation of the industry and allowing foreign airlines to carry passengers between Canadian cities. With the demise of competitor Canair 2000, the flag carrier now controls about 90 per cent of the market. That, said Solonchuk, is "unacceptable."

City in the deep

Explores searching of the western tip of Cuba confirmed the discovery

The Week That Was

Of large stone structures spread out like an urban area, Toronto-based Advanced Digital Communications, which is run by Canadians, used an unmarked helicopter to photograph the huge, semi-circular blocks, some in pyramidal shapes, formations lying about 750 m beneath the surface. The ruins, which may be 8,000 years old, resemble roads and buildings that scientists believe were part of a large city.

Strangler in doubt

How bestial is he in violent actions whether or not Robert DeSève, who police say was the

killer, thought, was it that the infamous 1980s killer DeSève confessed in 2002 to killing 12 women, 11 of whom police attributed to the stranger between 1962 and 1994. But what the remains of Mary Sullivan, believed to be the stranger's last victim, were exhumed at the request of both families, DNA found on the body did not match that of DeSève. His family, who wants the case reopened, believes that DeSève confessed only because he hoped to make money back and move on. He is accused before being jailed to death 26 years ago in a Peipie, Mass., prison.

Passages



Resigned: Edgar Bronfman Jr. will step down as executive vice-chairman of the Paris-based media giant Vivendi Universal SA in the new year. However, Bronfman, 46, does plan to stay on as vice-chairman of the board. Last year, Bronfman sold his family's Montreal-based liquor business, Seguin Co. Ltd., to Vivendi after transforming Seguin into an entertainment company with the purchase of MCA Inc.—owner of Universal Pictures—and PolyGram music.

Detained: Former RCMP officer and convicted murderer Patrick Kelly was denied early release from prison after applying for parole under the "two-stage" clause. However, at the hearing, judges decided that Kelly, 51, can apply for day parole in 15 months, after serving 20 years. Kelly was an anti-drug and drug officer in Toronto who was convicted of first-degree murder in the 1984 death of his wife, Joanne. He was sentenced to life imprisonment with no chance of parole until 2008.

Recovering: Sophie, the wife of Prince Edward, is recovering comfortably after emergency surgery. The Countess of Wessex, 56, was airlifted from their Surrey home to a London hospital and reportedly received treatment for an

ectopic pregnancy—which is when a fetus develops outside the womb.

Retiring: Gerald Levin, chief executive of AOL Time Warner, announced he will retire next May. Levin, 62, plans to focus on his philanthropic activities and will be replaced by Richard Parsons, co-chief operating officer. Parsons, 53, currently runs the company's music, movie and publishing branches.

Killed: Sir Peter Blake, New Zealand's two-time America's Cup winner, was killed when pirates raided his yacht on the Amazon River. Blake and a crew of 10 were visiting to clear customs and leave Brazil when pirates boarded his 36-metre vessel, the Seaquest, and held the crew at gunpoint. Blake, 55, owned



and was shot at least twice. The sailing champion was on a week-long trip to monitor global warming and pollution. He leaves his wife, Pippa, and two teenage children.

Convicted: A. Alfred Trainman, 76, the former chairman of New York-based auction house Sotheby's, has been found guilty of profiting from connections with his counterpart at Christie's—making as much as \$400 million (U.S.). Former Christie's chairman Anthony Tanzi, who lives in England, says he will not come to the United States to face charges.

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The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh

BY RON GRAHAM



In the last two years of his life, Pierre Trudeau suffered a crisis of faith. It was brought on, of course, by the sudden death of the former prime minister's youngest son. "Why him?" Trudeau would ask. "Why didn't God use me instead? I've tried, but I just can't find a reason." Every one of us has felt the same sense of bewilderment whenever we've lost a loved one to accident or illness. Many Canadians experienced it at the time of Trudeau's own death. And North Americans in mass shared it for weeks following the tragic events of Sept. 11.

Indeed, death in such terrible numbers by so banal and calculated a method was all the more incomprehensible—a shock made worse by the erasing of the belief that it could never happen here. Reason rarely helps. For one thing, grief is an emotional and physiological reaction. It releases itself in weeping, wailing, shivering and a profound fatigue, none of which is conducive to rational thought. For another thing, no one on the plane—no pope, no rabbi, no imam, no guru—can explain why this person was taken and that person approved.

Faced with such random cruelty, many people have turned away from God out of despondency or disgust. And who can blame them, particularly when death comes, as it did at the World Trade Center, in God's own name?

In fact, the mosque with the plaque of the Palestinian, the grandfather with the creation of Khazaria. I gave up on the United Church after two Easter services. One featured the minister, dressed in a beach coat and holding a microphone, pretending to be a TV anchor covering the Crucifixion live from Calvary. The second starred a white, middle-aged, middle-class woman delivering the poignant Passion story as a rap number.

That's not to say that I didn't meet good people doing good deeds whenever I went. But the institutions had generally accustomed to the fire of all institutions. Their wisdom had become misanthropy. Their structures had become bureaucratism. Their operations had become politicized. Worse, in striving to offer the comfort their clients sought, they tended to pamper them with self answers to hard truths.

Every great spiritual teacher, from Moses to Jesus, from Muhammad to the Buddha, had to go alone into a desert or pass through a dark night of the soul. Their eyes weren't to be fooled; they were to be shattered. These men weren't to be tranquilized; they were to be transcended. Not long ago, a friend of mine, an intelligent businessman with a fondness for Scotch and cigars, was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Instead of undergoing surgery, he took up yoga, mixed with a jogging routine and changed his diet. At no time did he ever think of approaching a deity. He didn't want sermons or exorcisms. He wanted results here and now. Miraculously, according to his latest tests, he's found them.

Since that beautiful, terrible morning, last September, I've

DEATH'S GIFT TO LIFE

The horrors of Sept. 11 remind us that life is precious—and ennobled by spirit

In fact, God barely survived the Age of Reason in the West. Science and the philosophy of materialism proclaimed the omnipotent, omniscient Creator dead. He became She. She dissolved into Nature. It morphed into Spirit. And Spirit is perhaps best exemplified these days by Harry Potter's school headmaster, Professor Dumbledore: wise, benign, yet mysteriously absent when Harry most needs him.

There are others, however, in this era of uncertainty, who have taken a leap of faith and hoped to land in the arms of God. The power of God powers all understanding, they declare, and mysticism are the ways of the Lord. And if they can find comfort in prayer and community, why not say they should?

Unfortunately, most North American churches are in the middle of their own uncertainty. Faced with declining attendance, aging congregations and the indifference of the young, they are under pressure to transform themselves from places of worship and contemplation into homeless shelters, concert halls, tourist attractions, welfare agencies, political forums or religious cafes.

Looking at religion in Canada, I found the Roman Catholics obsessed with sexual controversies and authority issues. The Anglicans seemed distracted by native lawsuits and property disputes. The evangelists were preoccupied with the survival of

found myself discussing death with my children or, belatedly, a stranger on a train, even a colleague at a breakfast meeting. I'm sure it's been the topic of many a church service, therapy session and husband reflection. Yet, among all the accounts of victims and survivors, the gospelical analysis and war raves, I can't recall reading or hearing once one item that dealt frankly and directly with the real concern for whom the terrorist were the more agents. What did they bewail at their most poignant weeping, after all, other than our *lost* of dying?

I shouldn't have been surprised. Modern North American culture, shaped as it's been by extended periods of prosperity and peace, has been spectacularly successful in suppressing the reality of death. We launch our chronically ill to institutions. We lock ourselves behind glass panes in grand communities. We drown up Star Wars shields to protect our children from foreign missiles.

Naturally safe, we dwell in a life's paradise of eternal youth. Our universities grow from hippies and Vietnam vets through every Middle-aged adult and beyond like their strange sons. The nation seeks to diagnose their youth with health and hypochondria. And now we have the hope that Advanced Cell Technology Inc., of Worcester, Mass., will soon be able to offer us eternal life for a price.

We've managed to turn Death into an abstraction or, worse,

'Yes, death is real, death is near, death is painful. We saw that. But we also saw that humans have the capacity to die with a courageous spirit and a loving heart'

an entertainment. It's a disaster flick or Luchini thriller; it's a video game or a bloodbath; it's something that happens to other people in faraway countries on the 6 o'clock news. At Walt Disney World, my eight-year-old daughter and I lined up, not once but twice, to ascend the Tower of Terror in order to experience the sensation of plunging to earth from a tall building. What a scream.

Small wonder that so many men and women—artists, sophisticated individuals in the financial and cultural capital of the world—could look up into the sky, watch two commercial aircraft smashing into two crowded skyscrapers, and only think, "It's just like movie."

It's not that other societies, past or present, have valued life less; it's that they have seen death more. Too many of their babies have succumbed to disease and malnutrition. Too many wars, both civil and foreign, have decimated millions of their citizens. Too many plagues, earthquakes and droughts have been visited upon their lands. Though their grief is undoubtedly as intense as ours, they wouldn't debate themselves that death is just like a movie or couldn't happen here. They know it's always right beside us, whenever we are, a mere instant away. While it's not to embrace death like Osiris has Luchini's macho females do, it's only slightly less mad to deny its inevitability altogether. Death is an intrinsic part of the natural order of being. The wisest know that it will come and no one will be spared. In fact, the certainty of that knowledge gives them much of their wisdom.

In the face of that certainty, as evidenced by so many of the furrowed brows and tears from the World Trade Center and the bearded apostles, nothing much matters beyond love and compassion, service and self-sacrifice, family and friendship—spiritual values, I dare say, as opposed to material ones.

My overhead those calls, we took their messages to heart, and in the following days and weeks we experienced the sameness that every band of mortals finds when it walks away from the graveyard. How can life be carrying on as usual? Why can't the whole world be shaking now? How can those people still be laughing, those children playing, those couples kissing? Why is everybody rushing, chasing, fleeing and fleeing? What madness. What ignorance. Death they realize that they're going to die!

There, in our sorrow, we were convinced that nothing would ever be the same, least of all ourselves. Would we ever again be lighthearted? And we made vows, as ancient as New Year's resolutions, to minimize our pleasures, maximize our values, become wiser and kinder, because life is brief and leads only to the death.

For days following my father's funeral, I remember, I went around the city giving \$10 bills to every homeless person I met.



The death of Michel (watching while brother Sisto leaps, 1579) shock-Trade's tale

But that gravity pulled and I slipped back into my stingy habits. Life soon felt normal again because I hadn't really changed within.

Thus, life across North America has begun to feel normal again. The fellowship of strangers on the streets of Manhattan is fading, cool breezes, soft sunsets and Canadian mountains have returned. We're all adapting to new security measures just as we adapted to social and political changes in decades past, just as the people of Babel, Jerusalem, Kyoto and Sengoku have adapted to theirs in recent years. And our political and business leaders are already vowing us to get back to the fast-lane getting and spending of recent years, as though another terrorist misadventure device is the cure for what ails us.

We've even assumed bombing innocent civilians in far-off places—for the sake of a righteous, if too holy, war—without a moment's pause to think whether their suffering and ours could possibly equal ours. Soon, if all goes well for a while, we will start to believe once again that we are invincible, immune to the grim fate to which history and nature have condemned us.

But is that a normalcy to be wished for? Or is that the madness and ignorance we recognized so fleetingly, yet so clearly, when the walls of the twin towers came tumbling down? What's the only bright light to emerge from that dark, dust-enveloped debris: a spiritual lesson?

Yes, death is real, death is near, death is painful. We saw that. But we also saw that human beings have within themselves the capacity to die with a calm mind, a courageous spirit and a loving heart—so long as we live with a calm mind, a courageous spirit and a loving heart. The truth is, we are blessed with the precious freedom to make wise use of our period on earth, not to gain some personal selfish but to leave without cause for repentance or regret.

It neither maddens nor depresses, therefore, to be constantly aware that we will die. Such awareness is a marker against which we can keep setting our values. It makes present the future, the minutes, perhaps the seconds remaining to us. The world becomes even more beautiful, more wondrous, more fragile as soon as we truly grasp that it is—and we must die.

That's why the philosophers used to keep skulls lying on their desks. That's why the saints lived lives of prayer and good works. And that's why we must never forget the ruins at Ground Zero. ■

Timothy David Row Graham (www.timothydavidrowgraham.com) has written books on politics, history and religion, including God's Dominion, awarded for a Governor General Award in 1990.

Is North American culture suffering a spiritual crisis? www.ck12.org



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BY JONATHAN
GATEHOUSE
in Cairo

The "Delicious Ramadan Special" advertised in Arabic on the poster plastered across the windows of the Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet sounds like a good, greasy deal. Two pieces of the Colonel's best, two "Crispy Strips," rice, potato or bean salad, bread, dessert, and *qasner el-dim*, a traditional apricot drink, for the equivalent of just \$5.50 Canadian. But few of the people gathering outside the neighbouring Mustafa Mahmoud Mosque for a charitable meal can afford such a luxury. As the sun slips behind Cairo's office towers and apartment blocks, they arrive by bus or on foot from the poorer parts of the city. Women, empty cardboard boxes balanced on their heads, join the food line snaking through the courtyard to the mosque's front door.

Others, with children sometimes in tow, join the men at the tables inside the special tents for a sit-down dinner, their grids propped by the brightly patterned walls.

The lady hand-rot the strength of the fruit-punch drink boxes while the men and women—seated on opposite sides of the room—sneak peeks inside the white talcose container volumes from the mosque have placed in front of each chair. At sunset, the opening syllables of the imam's prayer crackle over the loud-speakers, signalling an end to the day's fasting. People fall on the floor, creeping in laughter and conversation. "This is the generosity of Ramadan," says Zakaria Shaban, pointing at the rice, stew and flat bread inside his container. "It's a noble act from the businessmen for the simple and the poor." The skinny 43-year-old companion with the dirty white washbasin looks around at the other tables and smiles broadly. "Ramadan is the most beautiful thing in the world, and so is Islam."

Nearly 1,400 years ago, Mohammed ibn

Abdallah was having a mid-life crisis. His race was good, life was comfortable for his family and friends, but something seemed to be missing. He was increasingly bothered by what he witnessed—the growing gap between rich and poor, the callousness and cruelty the citizens of his town showed towards one another, the declining importance of religion in everyday life. In the sixth month, as he had usually done, Mohammed left his home to contemplate these problems. In a cave high on Mount Hira, outside Mecca, he prayed and fasted, asking God for guidance. This time, on the night of the 27th day, he awoke with the sensation that someone else, a very powerful presence, was with him in the cave. Mohammed couldn't move or speak. He lay there, gripped in the arms of the angel Gabriel, until words—poetic phrases of great beauty—suddenly began to spout from his mouth. The year was 610 A.D. It was the first revelation of the message of Allah—the holy Quran—to his people.

Today, Islam, the religion founded by

Mohammed, has 1.2 billion adherents around the globe. Ramadan, the ninth month on the lunar calendar, is their holiest time of year, a period of worship and contemplation coupled with bursts of all-out celebration. Pious Muslims mark Ramadan by fasting each day between sunrise and sunset, abstaining from all nourishment, drink, tobacco and sex, until dawn's first light. They say prayer five times a day; many occupy their quiet moments by reading the Quran aloud, satisfying another of Allah's commands. Muslims are also required to show uncorrupted charity and tolerance for the poor during Ramadan. The holy book promises divine rewards for those who observe the fast—one of Islam's five pillars—and harsh judgment for those who break their bond without good reason.

This year, as American B-52s and fighter jets continue to pound the Taliban despite pleas from Muslim leaders for a holy month halt to the bombings, as Israeli tanks rumble through the West Bank, Ramadan has taken on a different

mood. In Egypt, the most populous Arab nation with 70 million people, where the holy month is celebrated like nowhere else (or so its citizens love to boast), the party rages on, but the wells of piety and love show signs of running dry.

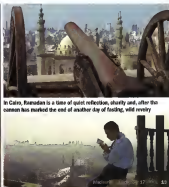
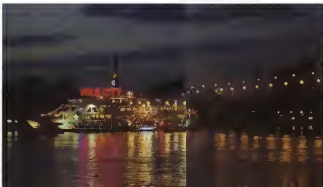
The open-air stall on the narrow street in old Cairo's Bab El Khalk neighborhood is a riot of gold-braided and coloured glass. Tarek Abd El Adhbi watches as a customer struggles to solve the logic puzzle and fit three fragile, four-foot-high jossens into the basket of a Hyundai. El Adhbi's family has been selling the traditional Ramadan lanterns for more than 60 years, and they have learned a thing or two about marketing. "We're very humorous," he says, between puffs of a *sheish*, the ubiquitous Arab water pipe. "At the time of the Gulf War there were Panzer lanterns, and Stealth plane ones." This year's hot seller is the bin Laden, a modernised lamp with a pointed, missile-shaped top. "We've sold right out of those," he says.

Deeper inside the bazaar's maze, past the shops selling fingerie and belly-dancing costumes, is a modest fruit and spice stand with the grand marabout The Ghourays. Esmat Company. The owner has set out three large bins of dates—the fruit Mohammed ate to break his fast—marked bin Laden, Bush and Blair. "The bin Laden represents the holy town he brought down," says the shopkeeper. "The Bush dates are thin and tall, and the Tony Blair have a small head and small body—they look like him."

Egyptians know the pain and fear the terrorists bring too intimately to take much pleasure in the devastation of Sept. 11. The Grand Imam of Al Azhar Al-Sharif, the Islamic scholarly authority for Sunni Muslims around the world, has repeatedly denounced bin Laden and his *jihad*. Islam is against terrorism, wherever you sit your source or place, because killing unarmed innocent men, women and children is an inhumanitarian act against the principle of all monotheistic religions and

THE HOLIEST MONTH

Ramadan is party time in Egypt. But with the mood soured by Afghanistan and the Palestinian question, some wonder if the celebration is too loud.



In Cairo, Ramadan is a time of quiet reflection, shanty and, after this season has marked the end of another day of fasting, wild revelry

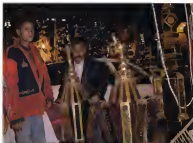
'No one can tell the United States what is right or wrong,' said one man. 'It's like the world is a soccer net and there's no goalkeeper.'

is rejected by proper minds," proclaimed Sheikh Mohammed Sayed Tantawi.

But in the streets and marketplaces, there are small expressions of satisfaction, like the secret schoolyard cheers when a victim finally bloodies the nose of the class bully. Zakaria Ahmed, a paragon at the El Fishawy coffee house, a Cairo hot spot for more than 200 years, contemplates his own reaction to the New York and Washington attacks, fingering his prayer beads as he watches a long line of chanting teenagers push their way through the crowd of late-night Ramadan revellers. "As a Muslim, what happened in the States doesn't satisfy me or gain my approval, but what's happening in Afghanistan doesn't make me happy either," he says. "No one can tell the United States what is right or wrong, it's like the whole world is a soccer net and there's no goalkeeper. They can shoot the ball whenever they please."

Many people espouse doubts that bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda network were really behind the attacks. The 19 Arabs aboard the four hijacked planes couldn't possibly have carried out such a complicated plot, given the pilot, because they would have been too busy arguing about who should be the ringleader. "What evidence is there that it is Osama bin Laden?" asks Nourdin Ibrahim, a middle-aged weaver from Upper Egypt who has recently moved to Cairo to look for work. "Why is the U.S. punishing a whole country? A lot of innocent women and children have been killed." His younger friend Rabaa, who sports a thick red and matching eye shadow, chimes in. "How can this communication and planning come out of a country so run down by war?" the demands. "My opinion is that it came from Israel, not Egypt or any other Muslim country. They are the ones with the capabilities. It's tired that creates problems for the whole world."

The two young women in the right blue jeans and form-fitting western perch on the edge of the boardwalk, hands clasped behind their heads, eyes swivelling around the melody. The crowd, mostly college-aged guys, climbs on the chain and tables to get a better look, hooting and clapping.



Shopping for lanterns—special Ramadan lanterns—at an open-air stall in old Cairo

appreciatively at the impromptu display of belly-dancing. On the walls, there are posters of Ricky Martin shaking his bon-bon and looking adorably at a can of Pepsi.

The Ramadan party is sponsored by a local brewery, but there isn't a beer in sight—Egyptians aren't allowed to consume alcohol in public during the holy month. But the middle-class kids cramming the upper deck of Le Pacha, an old Nile steamboat turned floating party palace, don't need any extra stimulation. They sing along with the band's synthesizer-driven music, laughing and shouting at the twists of fall in the backstage men and card games spread across the room.

It's 2 o'clock in the morning, and no one seems to be fatigued. "Ramadan is not what you see here," says Samir Hashem, 26, sipping his cell-phone nervously against a pack of Marlboro. "We're trying to celebrate being happy." Hashem suggests that only 20 per cent of Egyptian society is behaving the way he and his friends are. Everyone else is praying, fasting, visiting the Kora and trying to be closer to God, he assures me.

A lot of them are also watching TV Ramadan is also rampant work in the Arab world, as networks treat out special mar-

series, song and dance extravaganzas, and game shows that tap into the holiday spirit. This year's most popular program is a Barbara Walters interview show, *Howe Sarah Golden Goddess—A Very, Very Honest Interview*—where Arab celebrities confess their darkest secrets.

Sama grows that Ramadan has become too commercial and is losing its meaning. There's too much emphasis on lavish feasts and parties, they say. Nothing gets done during the month, so businesses, government and schools operate on half-days to accommodate the sleepy and hungry. Traffic always clogs in Cairo, gets worse as everyone rushes home for Ramadan. "Ramadan is a month where you are supposed to reflect, meditate, do away with the excess in your life, but it becomes just the opposite," says Ibrahim Elhamdy, a young writer who describes himself as a non-practising Muslim. "It's not that people are even aware of the hypocrisy. For years the message has concerned us form rather than substance."

Sheik Fawzi al-Zafar, Egypt's second highest ranking cleric, leans to the lot of complacency and thrags disapprovingly. "There is become more of a festive month like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but these are

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'This is a month where you are supposed to reflect, meditate, do away with the excess in your life, but it's become just the opposite'

social traditions," he says. Chatting with a visitor in his spacious office at Al Ahsa, his Excellency, a jolly little man with a positing resemblance to Oliver Hardy, admits to bigger worries this year. Why does the West always misinterpret the teachings of Islam, he asks? "We unfortunate that the Western media, especially in the United States and Europe, is dominated by Zionism and capitalism," says the sheik. "When a crime is done in the name of Islam, the media should refer to Islamic scholars. If they refuse the crime, then the media should blame it on the police, not the religion."

The ignorance of America and its allies, says Sheik al-Zakwani, is more evident in their decision to continue fighting in Afghanistan during the holy month, a time of peace and forgiveness. There is anger on the streets of the Arab world, the cleric warns, over Afghanistan, over the plight of the Palestinian people (who are defending themselves as persecuted in the Korean, he adds), rage over U.S. support for Israel. "There is a very obvious double standard. If the attacks of Sept. 11 are terrorism, then why isn't [Israeli Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon's attacks of women, children and olden every day?" demands Sheik al-Zakwani. "This anger comes not only one Osama bin Laden. It will create thousands of Osama bin Ladena if the States doesn't solve the problems."

Whether microphone in hand, Sheik Abdel Rahman wears the roseta like a Vegas pin. A freckling of a man with a round face, he looks like a not-so-successful boxer named Ellis Impenetrable, all white leather and chunky gold jewelry. A familiar black-and-white checkered jubbah is wrapped around his neck in his arms in a put song, *I Hate Israel*. "I hate Israel, and will say so if asked. I hate Israel for south Lebanon, for Jerusalem, and Iraq, and Syria, and Golan," he croons. "I love Yasser Arafat and his precious to me, I hate Israel." The cony Prada- and Chanel-clad crowd at the Semiramis International Hotel glances and looks along, gleefully posing for pictures at Ramzi posing obligingly at each table. No one ever went before according to anti-Israel sentiment in Egypt.



Cairo's poor enjoy a free meal; some of the more privileged dance the night away at a shipboard party on the Nile

scope also comes under fire. "What is the difference between the King of Saudi Arabia and Saddam Hussein?" asks Abu Fida Mady Abdel Elna, a former member of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood and would-be opposition politician. Abdel Elna has been jailed five times by the Egyptian government, most recently on charges of treason for trying to register his moderate Islamic coalition, Al Wasat (The Center), as a legitimate party. "Why is democracy not seen to be important in the Arab world like it is in South Africa, Eastern Europe and East Timor?" he asks.

Egypt has largely shunned its own domestic terrorism, there has been no methods, including arbitrary imprisonment, torture and state-sanctioned killings, may have simply served to export the problem to the rest of the world. After all, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Cairo-born doctor who is bin Laden's second-in-command, was defeated in 1981. The fundamentalists will tell you they walked on paths of blood on their way to the unconquered mecca," says

Where support for the corrupt and oppressive regimes that die the Arab land-

'If the attacks of Sept. 11 are terrorism, then why isn't Sharon's murder of children? This will create thousands of bin Ladens.'

Haidan Kaseem, a human rights activist. "When you look at Al Qaeda, it is almost like a gathering of sad, disappointed, ghost, the casualties of authoritarian regimes."

The city is still kilometers away from the pyramids, so close to traffic, when the first would-be tour guide wrecks open the passenger side door. The driver reaches over to push him back out and slams the door shut, throwing his brother, a young Peruvian into gear and backing away. Further down the road, two young men scrape death by stepping off the medians. My driver curses and berates. A third man sees the direction road into the car. "Go go pyramids!" he says. "Take you." I begin to groan, responding in my best approximation of Qatari, just telling my I like a Chevrolet tow-truck driver. He smirks at me for a long moment, then keeps on.

In the dusty parking lot, several men pile by the door handle and push their heads in the windows. Alongside the Coca-Cola Diner, more Egyptians haul goods from the backs of horses and carts. My French play is no use—they can't hear through my European language and Japanese for good reason, until they get a response. To my left, an elderly German couple is surrounded by angry Bedouins, who explain their in take a gesture in exchange for a modern flashlight.

Hamed Awad Tarnaw, 27, has been breaking his golfing seasons and rides on his camel, Mickey Mouse, to visitors to the pyramids for the past 15 years. Things are bad, he says, way worse than in 1997, when Islamic extremists massacred almost 60 tourists at Luxor, 500 km south of Cairo. "After the Sept. 11 attack, no tourists," he says. He pauses, smooths over the folds in his traditional galabeya robe, reads his Chicago Bulls' cap, and glances over his shoulder at the empty plaza. "The government says 50 per cent of the people are still coming, but it's not true—maybe 30 per cent. At the hotels, many people are leaving these positions," Mickey grunts and loudly smoothes wand.

Tarnaw, who lives with his wife and two young children in neighboring Giza—the middle-class Cairo suburb where



Human rights activist Kaseem (top), al-Zakwani says there is anger in the streets

Sept. 13, he says. Mohamed Awad grew up—Agam he can hold out for another month or so before he has to sell his gold wedding band or even worse, Mickey. His cousin Hussein has already sold one of his camels. "We're poor, but we're not rich," says Tarnaw. "We live day by day."

Downsized at the tourist club Ramzi Abdel Hakeem, where the only visible connection to life in an Islamic country is the presence of beef bones at breakfast (the Koran prohibits Muslims from eating pork), business is suffering as well. Staff and security guards in the bus and mobile lobby outnumber guests three to one. Ahmed Taha, the assistant manager, says occupancy is about 40 per cent, twice as good as most of his competitors, thanks to the large number of permanent residents. "Ramzi is usually slow, but we get a lot of people from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait," he says. "Not this year."

It's hard to overstate the damage the Sept. 11 attacks have inflicted on the Egyptian economy. In the marketplace, the business people have already sorted through cause and effect. "I hope bin Laden is happy in his cave," says Amir Pelly, who makes wall hangings for tourists and traditional Ramadan treats for his hotels and rich businessmen. "It's because of him that I have to eat meat."

In the area grand sales, oil pansies at Mohamed Salah's bookstore, spicing fish and chocolate macarons, late the walls. A cigar counter decorated with a fishing pattern of a Scottish terrier sits on the first floor of the cafe. The family business, across the street from the U.S. embassy in Cairo, has seen better days. "We've been on the down escalator for a long time," says Salah, a businessman and Islamic historian. In a city where you can survive 5,000 years of progress during an afternoon's walk, it's easy to lose perspective. "Twenty-five years ago, Ramadan was more than a month. Now it's just a day. It's just a day."

When they played Ping-Pong. Then, maybe 40 per cent of the population fared, but now it's more like 80 or 90 per cent, he estimates. Back in the days when Egypt was the power center of the Muslim world, Salah's grandfather, a very pious woman, never would have considered it. Things have changed considerably since the 1960s, when he was a young man of the Gulf states, with his uncle's occupation of Islam, rich and influential.

Someday the pendulum will swing back again, he says. Despite the acts of violence and intimidation, the dire predictions, the alarmist articles about the incalculable spread of fundamentalism, those who would ruin the true message of Islam will eventually fall by the wayside. People will simply tire of being told how they must worship their God. "I don't like having my personal freedom infringed upon, neither does anyone else," says Salah. "That's not Islam." Outside, the amplified music plays from competing neighborhood mosques echo between the buildings.



BY BARBARA WICKENS

For seven-year-old Jenna, a school trip to the Children's International Learning Centre in Hamilton was more like stepping into a fairy tale. A giant, red, paper-mâché Chinese dragon, with large white teeth dangling from the ceiling. A multi-colored, life-size replica of the Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity, Lakshmi, hanging from the wall. In the aisle of the room, a statue of a girl in the folds of her surrounding a rock border. And all around were soft, white Christmas lights. "It's so beautiful," the Grade Two student exclaimed. "I want to touch everything." Jenna and her classmates at Hamilton's Thornhill Elementary School are among the nearly 1,700 youngsters who have toured the not-for-profit centre since October—a 30-per-cent increase over the

Out of the mouths of babes.

It has become a trend to say that Sept. 11 changed everything. For many Canadians, this has manifested itself in a host of everyday ways: dealing with increased airport security; greater line-ups at border crossings to the United States; the exacerbated effects of terrorism as an economy that was already slowing. The shocking spectacle and sheer magnitude of the tragedy also engendered a strong emotional response that prompted many Canadians to ask, "What can I do?"

Where they find their answer depends on their ethical, religious or spiritual values. For some, it lies, at least in part, in good works, whether volunteering, donating to charity or performing humanitarian deeds. Others are turning to their religion—and apparently trying to understand the beliefs of others. That reaching out, according to some, is the silver lining. "The terrible tragedy provoked us to do things with each other that we had been

for the worse, nine per cent said their view had actually changed for the better.

For many people, the challenge lies in sustaining the changes they've made, however positive or noble their intentions. The most intricate way in fact like they were helping, somehow, was to donate to charity. Since Sept. 11, the Canadian Red Cross has received about \$14 million in donations earmarked for U.S. victims of the terror attacks. But fundraising professionals are concerned that the initial impulse may have faded, and are anxiously waiting to rally their critical, year-end, money-raising drives.

Houses of worship have already seemed to witness some backsliding. Immediately after the attacks, people crowded into churches, synagogues, temples and mosques—many for the first time in years. Since then, attendance has been dropping, although not necessarily back to pre-Sept. 11 levels. That decline comes as no surprise to Father Ken Koop of St. Peter's



OUR CHANGING LIFE

same period last year. The organization, established in 1979 to encourage respect for all peoples, changes its displays regularly. The current one, Portals of Light, shows how people around the globe celebrate significant religious and cultural occasions this time of year. In addition to the exhibits about Chinese New Year, the Hindu celebration Diwali, the Sikh Navratri midwinter ceremony Gurbachan and Christmas, visitors can learn about the Jewish festival Hanukkah. Kourouza, established in 1966 for people of African ancestry worldwide to reflect on their background, family and community, and Ramadan. The exhibits motivated Shabryne, who moved to Canada from Bangladesh in 1997, to show his classmates how he prays during the Muslim holy month. Jenna took it all in. "It's very important for us to learn about other people," she said earnestly. "There's been a lot of misunderstanding in the last little while."

nothing about for a long time," says Rev. Rev. Balak, chairman of the inter-religious affairs committee of the Canadian Jewish Congress and rabbi of the Congregation Machabei Hadas synagogue in Ottawa. "Our position is that spiritually we are all on the same page. We are all united against what happened."

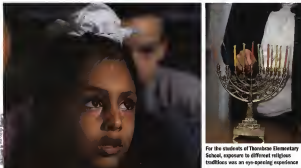
Some of these reactions are reflected in Maclean's eighth annual year-end poll, to be published in full in the Dec. 31/Jan. 7 double issue. According to the survey of 1,200 Canadians, since the terrorist attacks, 72 per cent have become more appreciative of family life, 26 per cent have less interest in material wealth and possessions, 23 per cent feel a stronger need for religious beliefs, and 16 per cent have a stronger desire to go to a place of worship. The poll also found that 51st majority—73 per cent—had not changed their view, for better or worse, of the Islamic religion because of the terrorist attacks. And while 16 per cent replied their view had changed

Roman Catholic Church in Regina. "We've seen the same before," says the priest, who is also president of the Regina Council of Churches. The only religious act attracting big crowds, he adds, anti-demonstration ones, where crowds are more out and dried. "When some people are frightened," says Rev. Koop, "they look for things spelled out in black and white."

There are those whose consciences will not let them sit idly in Nova Scotia, about 20 women launched Yarmouth CARES for Community Afghan Relief Efforts to raise money for Afghan Canadian humanitarian work in the war-torn country. One of their fundraising projects is selling small candles set in recycled glass, designed by local artist Anne Cain and made for them by the Atlantic Candle Co. "It's fantastic to see what \$10 can do," says Linda Coulter, a member of the "silver women's group." Each candle buys either one blanket or 6.4 kg of food.

The students of Chalkwell Middle

With the world becoming a more terrifying place, many of us are asking, "What can I do?" For some, the answer lies in looking inward. For others, it involves reaching out, and understanding people of different faiths.



For the students of Thornhill Elementary School, exposure to different religious traditions was an eye-opening experience

'It's very important for us to learn about other people,' one student said. 'There's been a lot of misunderstanding in the last little while.'

School, in British Columbia's Fraser Valley, decided they now wanted to put something positive back into the past Sept. 11 world. They decided to direct their efforts close to home—the Eden Intermediary Care Centre, a provincially financed nursing home just blocks from the school. After meeting with the residents, whose average age is 87, the Grade 7 to 9 students decided to build them a garden. They raised a money drive, asking the residents to pay admission in daffodil bulbs. They collected 2,800 bulbs and with donated building materials—including shovels near the teaching staff paid for—they spent many Saturdays at the Eden centre building the garden, including raised beds, pathways and a gazebo.

For a small minority, the hateful acts of Sept. 11 opened a floodgate that, to their own thinking, freed them to express their own hate. Ignoring the fact that most consider the terrorist act done in the name of Islam a perversion of one of the world's great religions, small-minded thugs have subjected Muslims across Canada to at least 90 incidents of harassment and threats.

And not just Muslims. In one instance, arsonists destroyed the only Hindu temple in the Hamilton area. Meanwhile, anti-immigration and white supremacist groups are baying at an aspect in their media. For some Canadian Muslims, the atmosphere of distrust is threatening not only their physical but their spiritual well-being. "Their faith is shaken by all of this," says Prof. Mahmood Elmaghrabi, national president of the Canadian Islamic Congress in Windsor, Ont. "We haven't reached the point of people going up on the mosques. But we've had to emphasize the beauty of the religion. We are a community that is healing."

Many Canadians, though, want to break the cycle of intolerance, and some Canadians have responded to the terrorist attacks by learning about other religions. Aaron Hughes, professor of religious studies at the University of Calgary, says the numbers of students taking his class, Introduction to Islam, are "way up" since Sept. 11. "Even my class on Arabic has increased enrollment," Hughes adds.



That teaching unit is not restricted to Islam. On Dec. 16 in Toronto, there will be a multi-faith open house in the gallery of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, where adherents of Baha'i, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism will, according to the promotional literature, "display their spiritual words."

Karen MacLay-Llewellyn, a lay pastor minister at Trinity-St. Paul's United in Toronto, says that's exactly the sort of re-

sponse to Sept. 11 that members of her congregation are eager for. "I think maybe we're all becoming more sensitive to one another," she adds. "If there's a vision of hope in all the horrors, it's that it has pulled us together. I hope we can keep the momentum."

That's what they're aiming for at the Hamilton children's centre. The day the Thornbury students were there, they may have thought they were playing as they painted murals—traditional Islamic architecture common in Hindu wedding ceremonies, among other things—an cardboard cannot find, or read on a book, which in the West has become a symbol of the oppression of women. But Eleanor Chisholm, program director and past president of the centre, says they painted have bigger expectations. "They don't want to go from crisis to crisis," she says. "They want to understand their neighbours and they want their children to understand the beliefs and values of others in their classrooms—now, more than ever before."

With Ken MacQueen in Vancouver and Susan McClelland in Hamilton

WORK AND SPIRITUALITY

Well before Sept. 11, Toronto corporate consultant Ann Coombs had decided a change in workplace attitudes. Employees, she noted, were making poor decisions that had to do with money or track options and more with the quality of life at work—including the desire for a spiritually satisfying environment. When Coombs' book, *The Living Workplace: Spirit, Soul and Success in the 21st Century*, was published in February, it quickly became a Canadian best seller. It caught the attention of top leaders at the Bank of Montreal—they bought 600 copies, put their logos on the books and gave them to clients—and Oprah Winfrey who has scheduled Coombs for a close appearance on her TV talk show in the new year. Coombs' message is "have heart first then it might as first appear. 'We're not talking spirituality here,'" says the consultant, whose clients include Ford of Canada, Campbell's Soup Co. and IBM. Organizations hire their bottom line, she says, if they do no more than pay to survive to the con-

cept of a workplace that respects their employees' spiritual values. "Employees these days are required to calculate heart and soul," she says, "but when that sort of loyalty is not returned when corporations place shareholders' demands above the individual responsibility of the market, we're all well being, or focus on short-term financial gains at the expense of ethics and values, there will be a price paid in the long term."

In the wake of Sept. 11, Coombs' firm, which also has an office in Vancouver, pulled 1,500 employees from Canada and their jobs. In all, between 50 per cent provided a greater sense of fear at their workplace, caused injury by job losses resulting from the attacks, 40 per cent said the tragedy had caused them to reconsider their life's priorities, and 34 per cent said they were planning on changing jobs in 2002 because of the present negative environment in their workplace. But that statistic is incorrect, Coombs says. "The economy is going to get hot," she cautions. "But it will be impossible to get great people back." Barbara Wilkins



ONTARIO AUTOMOTIVE MARKETPLACE

Entertaining Autos

Part 2

BY MATTHEW BRUNER

DVDs, GPSes and MP3s bring multimedia to the humble automobile

DVD players are among the most exciting new offerings for in-car entertainment, and Delphi Automotive Systems offers one of the most remarkable. The company's Commport Seat-top Rear-Seat Audio/Video entertainment system allows passengers in the back to play DVD movies or plug-in game platforms.

The Commport fits on top of a rear bench seat, offering flexibility and portability for DVD-based entertainment applications. The system is designed for easy installation and removal and fits almost any car or truck with a backseat regardless of size. The entertainment system can be installed in seconds by securing the console into the middle belt of the backseat and plugging the power cable into the lighter power source. A 17-in. (44-cm) diagonal colour display fits up from the console to show movies or games.

The compact console also provides storage space to track headphones, game cartridges, DVDs and other accessories. Its audio/video control panel is designed to prevent damage and contains mounted headphone jacks, volume controls and game inputs, and its DVD player accommodates DVD videos as well as standard music CDs. Delphi also plans to market a flip-down rear screen version of the system to broaden its rear-seat entertainment system line-up.

Aftermarket suppliers are delighted that they are finally onto a hot new product category, especially since car manufacturers have co-opted full audio and security products for factory installation. For the home, DVD players have been the fastest-selling product in the history of consumer electronics, according to the Consumer Electronics Association, and auto manufacturers

suppliers hope the same enthusiasm will apply to their markets.

Claron, for example, has a new version of AutoPC—now called Joyride—that includes a DVD player for movies. The new name is meant to emphasize the entertainment aspects of the product, as opposed to the informational or personal computing aspect.

Joyride's in-dash unit can play DVD movies for the backseat audience over infrared-headsets while those in the front listen to audio programming. Audio source can be either an MP3 file from a 20MB hard-drive inserted in the in-dash unit or a separate CD-changer installed in the trunk. Like AutoPC, Joyride is based on Microsoft's Windows CE operating system.

Computers devoted to navigation and costing around \$2,000 were selling poorly when Claron and Microsoft first introduced AutoPC in 1998. The two companies reasoned that a general-purpose multimodal computing platform like AutoPC would be more attractive because it could run not only navigation, but also the audio system and information applications such as address-book access, e-mail and traffic information.

But since 1998 Claron has sold only 4,000 to 5,000 AutoPCs. The problem then was that consumers found AutoPC intimidating; they didn't understand its benefits. But now, says Claron, dealers have no trouble explaining the benefits of car video—and consumers are agreeing.

GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS

A global positioning system (GPS) is not new technology, but its features, capabilities and applications are constantly upgrading.

The primary function of a GPS is to help drivers and the fleet manager decrease. General Motors OnStar system, with 24-hour access to a live representative, has played into this gasoline-hungry market. In 1996, for example, more than one million GM drivers who pay for services, ranging from roadside assistance to more sophisticated, concierge-style packages that offer the ability to book travel and restaurant reservations.

While concierge service may seem like a bit of a fluff to some, OnStar's safety features are of great interest to many drivers. As with similar programs offered by Mercedes-Benz and Nissan, OnStar automatically alerts police if an airbag is deployed. Such activations have reached 100 per month in the United States.

GPS safety functions have expanded to include diagnosing engine woes, unlocking doors if keys are locked inside, flashing light in a parking lot and tracking a vehicle if it's stolen.

In addition, Intrans capableness will be added to OnStar's services. As the push

for a driver and the words "Virtual Advisor," the system will connect to a central service when a cellular phone link. This will enable the driver to rely for weather, traffic and news, all with voice-activated navigation. This moving screen of fiery swirls, dot of its safety features is the fact that two cars have been unless the vehicle is stopped.

Wireless-technology applications will not only include safety and information, but traffic as well. In Germany, for instance, BMW drivers can get a real-time, GPS-based system that alerts them to traffic developments along their route and offers alternatives. In addition, this system can be used to find parking lots in the driver's destination and indicate whether they're full.

AUDIO SYSTEMS

For radio lovers, Ford in partnership with Sirius, is the first American auto company to offer 100 channels of satellite-delivered radio programming in the United States. For those drivers who prefer to choose their own music, Pioneer has announced that Verison has licensed its award-winning technology for a new vehicle audio system.

Pioneer is the developer of one of the first automotive digital-media



platform systems, and this new system, called MACH MP3, will enable consumers to enjoy MP3 music tracks through their existing car audio systems. Designed specifically for the automotive environment, the MACH MP3 will play up to 4,000 high-quality digital-audio tracks, enabling drivers to take their entire music collections wherever they go. The company's digital media playback system was previously showcased at the June 2000 MP3 Summit and brought home awards for "Best Overall Product" and "Best Car MP3 Player."

INTO THE FUTURE

Clearly, automotive entertainment technology is moving in the fast lane. As you head out on the real-world version of the information highway, be sure to buckle up—end of course, enjoy the ride.

ROOTS



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Morning News

with Paul Cook & Marlane Oliver

680News
ALL NEWS RADIO



Peter C. Newman

Defence is no joking matter

Searching for the appropriate symbol to represent the horrific turn of events of the past few months, I keep staring at an unusual object on my desk. It's a buff bag (spermy), which I nabbed in a souvenir on the final flight (from Vancouver to Toronto on May 5) of Boon Air, the shortest-bred (41 days) of our vanishing airlines. Throwing up for living like at pretty well caught the mood of the ruddy season we've experienced since Sept. 11—it's cosmic terror, economic mayhem and green TV flashes of distant war.

Sticking with the air-motif metaphor, I was scotched last month upon hearing that Northwest Airlines refused to hand out artificial sweetener along with coffee and tea, in case people mistake it for anthrax. At the same time, I fully sympathized with the Toronto airport security guards who confiscated pens from Remembrance Day pilgrims. Had they let them go through, glassblows of Air Canada passengers might have spent their journey sucking pins into wooden dolls of Robert Milton.

On a world scale, predictability has evaporated. Civility is dead. Hevies abound. Scorch-and-burn directives are routine. Dread of terrorism has become so ingrained that it even prompted the featherbrained Christian government to adopt bank closures that ban any demonstrations except Sunday school picnic. Canada's prosper within this nihilist scenario is that of a ruse-died byzantine we have to the threatening noise around us, but don't have the slightest inkling of how to respond.

The stunner narrative was Defence Minister Art Eggleton's heroic directive to his troops: "Obviously," he declared in Edmonton while inspecting the proud cadre of 1,000 soldiers due ready to ship out to Afghanistan. "Obviously, we're not going to send our people into a condition in which they are unwelcome." Well, obviously. While Taliban struggles who are warring, our people's mission poses don't welcome Canadians with wine and Arab mezzaluna dainties, somebody might get hurt.

Eggleton's heroic declaration of war, guaranteed a prominent footnote in any collection of military bluffs, was immediately school by the coldest-in-chief of the Shawington Fullerton: "If hard fighting breaks out, we will leave." Prime Minister Jean Chrétien proclaimed. This is strategic: underkill if two remnants of the Robin Williams set in which he made up himself police who patrol Kandahar's streets unnamed "Seep" he means the lobby chasing a back-slobber: "And if you don't stop immediately, I'll shoot 'Seep' again."

Not in this gang-bro attitude limited to our associates

ground commitment. While five navy vessels are steaming towards the war zone, Canadian liaison officers are instructed to merely remind their American counterparts about our historic role of engagement, or rather, disengagement. Our battle-worthy patrol frigates, which, except for their dentist helicopters, are state-of-the-art fighting machines, have been strictly forbidden to engage in any form of offensive action.

It's easy enough to make fun of our military—and quite unfair, because even if most of their equipment is beyond salvage, their courage and loyalty is beyond question—but we're playing in a rough league now I remember Colin Powell during the Gulf War, when he was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, sternly enunciating America's military doctrine during the Gulf War: "Once you have established a clear political objective, then it seems to me the very way to achieve that objective, if military force is required, is a decisive way. Such as

lock the Iraqi army out of Kuwait, such as get rid of the government of Panama totally—not just lock the army out, but get rid of its entire government, and that's what we did in 1989 on 12 hours' notice, with overwhelming decisive force." An secretary of state, Powell is now considered one of the Bush administration's congressional doves.

There was no quarter given by the memoirs on Sept. 11. War will then be

in the future. We are not a weakling people, and we ought not to believe so if we were. But terrorism is different. It is dedicated to the deliberate massacre of innocent victims, and we ought to take more than a token stand against such indiscriminate slaughter.

Waging war must remain an alternative, a last resort to be abandoned and deplored. The spreading of our spread from us is due not to any lack of professionalism on this part, but the absence of political will to take their function seriously. Canada is a liberal democracy with no imperialistic ambitions. In this perilous age, partial defence must become a political priority instead of a carbon afterthought.

Nerves, spirit and air force mirror the society they are pledged to defend. In Canadian case, if their role is hard to pin down, it's because we as a people lack any definable creed. But in the final analysis, our survival on this delicate planet hinges on our will to protect our institutions, and that, in turn, depends on how much we know to value them.

The Roan Air buff bag is in my washbasin now, where it belongs. Meanwhile, I'm writing for leaders who will mislead the pride I will feel in my country.



U.S. soldiers continue their hunt for bin Laden and members of his Al-Qaeda network



New prime minister Karzai (below) is a respected leader from the Pashtun group

A TURNING POINT

Afghan factions agree to a new governing council. Now comes the hard part.

BY ARTHUR KENT



After 23 years of intractable conflict, perhaps the only thing as perplexing as the prospect of further fighting in Afghanistan is the appearance of a reflect instant solution: a government of peace and national reconciliation. And, coincidentally, talk of the final and complete surrender by the hardest of the Taliban's hardliners, who have resisted, for nine full weeks in their stronghold of Kandahar, the worst that the U.S. navy and air force can throw at them.

Now Afghans perceive these developments to be anything but what they appear to be, because there is a country whose appearance are almost always deceiving: from a quick examination of the news, interim governing council patched together in Bonn produces a chameleon of matching places and intrigues. That the agreement reached among the four parties to the talks marks the first time in

Afghanistan's history that power has been transferred peacefully. And the choice of prime minister is an enlightened and encouraging one: Hamid Karzai is a respected leader from the country's largest ethnic group, the Pashtuns, and a man, remarkably, with no blood on his hands from the gruesome years of civil war.

But although Karzai has taken the throne for at least the council's initial six-month tenure, another group has made off with the crown jewels. The defense, foreign and interior ministries have been scooped up by leaders of the Panjshir Valley element of the Northern Alliance, Mohammed Fahim, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah and Yousuf Qanooni might be capable and honest ones—the trio have maintained a surprising calm in Kabul since the Taliban's arrest last month—but none of the other ethnic, political and tribal groups in Afghanistan reject the Panjshir's dominance of the council.

Not surprisingly, Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, the widow of Mawla-i-Sharif,

was first to voice his intention to shun the new government. Dostum's many critics dismiss him as totally unfit for the foreign ministry post he craved, some describe him as a drunk, an incoherent man and a homicidal megalomaniac. So feared and hated is the Uzbek general in Kabul that he is unlikely he could enter without a small army to protect him. Even his Northern Alliance colleagues have ruled out that kind of entourage coming to town.

As the arrival of a much different armed force has a new basis of continuing negotiation, and very tense and difficult talks at that: an international convergence of troops, a so-called substitution force, that would consolidate security in Kabul as the interim government begins its work later this month. Troops from the 3rd Brigade of Prince's Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry could be part of that force. (Members of the 3rd JTF-2, or Joint Task Force Two, have already moved into the region on so-called missions—although where and what remains a secret.) That the terms and tim-

ing of a substitution force's arrival were left undecided is seen as evidence of the new council's imperfect nature, and the huge distance yet to be covered until it can relieve civilian suffering.

Humanitarian aid is still only trickling into the country. The flow of food, clothing and equipment for reconstruction will have to be rapidly increased if towns and cities are to be stabilized—the first stage of bringing them completely under the new government's umbrella. And the most urgent imperative, disarmament, is a challenge that hasn't even been addressed, and won't be until a national security force can be assembled and deployed.

Still, the interim council seems as a positive first step. "It's not the kind of government many people expected," says Zahir Tarin, the influential broadcaster with the BBC's Dari language service. "But all of us are very proud and excited by what has been achieved in Bonn, because the council represents a bridge leading to the future, a future of peace."

There was more than a mere observer at the Bonn talks. Behind the scenes, delegates from all four groups sought his advice on sticking points, well aware that he is one of the best-known voices of fact and



reason, heard over millions of radio sets in and around Afghanistan. When the agreement was finally announced, it was Tarin who relayed the historic sounds he walked his mobile phone around the conference chamber and let all the key signatories speak directly to the Afghan people. Thousands of rifles away, the country's war-torn—and many millions of war-weary citizens—tried to comprehend the prospect of an end to the fighting. "I tell you, my hands were shaking," Tarin told *Maclean's*. "Everyone could sense this was a turning point in our history."

A turning point, he and all Afghans agree, that signals the start of another long journey. Significantly, that process begins with prime minister-designate Karzai not in Kabul, but near the Taliban heartland of Kandahar. Until tribes and communities in regions such as this endorse Karzai's administration, the rebuilding of the nation can't really get underway. Kandahar is notorious as perhaps the country's most medieval region, a place where, historically, all Afghan leaders have had to cope with the most byzantine of the local networks of tribal, religious and criminal elements.

"Yes, there are dangers," admits a close associate of Karzai. "We aware that con-

tain Pashtun individuals have been active in some of the tribal negotiations with the Taliban in Kandahar." These individuals, he says, are some of the rogue cohorts of Pashtun military intelligence community, who, for nearly a decade, have been profiting from the lucrative black market in northwest Afghanistan. They were key to the Taliban's rise to power in the mid-1990s, and are clearly not letting go without trying to retain position and influence for their Kandahari confederates. "We can expect that some of yesterday's middle-ranking Taliban will emerge tomorrow as nationalists or traditionalists or by just calling themselves tribal leaders," Karzai's aide explains. "But, in time, because the great mass of our people desire real change, we can subdue Kandahar and the region."

Meanwhile, for the Bush administration, in general and particularly for the CIA, the balance now shifts even more from the military campaign to detective work: tracking down Osama bin Laden and the thousands of Al-Qaeda and Taliban soldiers who are quickly making into the rural population on either side of the Afghan-Pakistan border. Last week, there were reports that Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Egyptian doctor who is bin Laden's mentor, had been injured—perhaps even killed—in a U.S. airstrike near Feroz Kot. Al-Qaeda director George Tenet, aware that segments of Pakistan's military community remain supportive of the Taliban, has pressed President Pervez Musharraf to ensure that his borders are closely watched to prevent withdrawing militants slipping through the Pakistani net.

The devil's apple is almost certainly no lost. In late November, for instance, large numbers of Taliban troops fleeing Jalalabad made their way through the Kunar Valley and crossed into Pakistan's Buner agency, a tribal area largely beyond the control of Musharraf's army. Elsewhere, on the border just inside Afghanistan, the scandalously high civilian death toll in the area of Tora Bora—Middle East frontiers since at least 80 Afghan civilians have been killed and 50 wounded in U.S. bombing raids against surrounding villages—speaks of the human cost of the American quest for the supposed residence of the apostate cause, Osama bin Laden. As week 20 of Washington's campaign begins, the prime target remains as elusive as a definitive solution to the era of war and violence in Afghanistan.

DECLARATION OF WAR

Israel responds with tanks and rockets to a rash of suicide bombings



Explosion: Anfal's helicopters in Gaza

The body count mounts, level once more, and Israeli soldiers and Palestinian suicide bombers prepare their weapons for the next bloody clash. Terrorists with Hamas—the Islamic Resistance Movement—scored what was, to them, one of their greatest triumphs on Dec. 1, when two Arab men blew themselves up on a crowded pedestrian mall in Jerusalem, killing 10 people between the ages of 14 and 20 and injuring 200. The following day, another Arab man detonated a bomb on a bus in Haifa, killing 16 people in a hail of shrapnel and leaving 40 injured. It was one of the bloodiest 24-hour periods in Israel's history, facing Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to cut short his visit to Washington, where he was meeting with George W. Bush. On his return, he declared "war on terrorism"—and on Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority. "Arafat is responsible," Sharon

said. "He chose a strategy of murder."

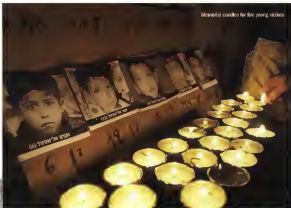
Israeli troops and tanks then entered dozens of Palestinian-controlled towns and villages across the Gaza Strip and West Bank. In a direct warning to Arafat, rockets fired from Israeli fighter jets destroyed two of his helicopters and a landing pad in Gaza. Arafat, who was working in Ramallah, accused Israel of escalating the conflict and called for a meeting of the Arab states. But in the face of growing international condemnation—and calls from both Sharon and Bush for action against Hamas—his police placed the militant organization's head, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, under house arrest. When Arafat complained that further action on his part was irresponsible until Israel stopped its attacks, Sharon agreed to a ceasefire, giving him 12 hours to arrest 36 terrorists whose names had been supplied to Arafat by Israeli authorities. When Arafat failed to respond,

Israeli missiles again pounded targets across the Gaza Strip.

Arafat claimed that the Israeli offensive amounted to an attempt to "oust" him from office. But he also faces an enemy from within. Polls show his popularity—once critics would say wobbly—to such a degree that the Israelis have ended his support among moderate Palestinians to less than 25 per cent. More radical elements were banished to the West Bank last week, hundreds of Hamas supporters fought with Palestinian police outside Yassin's home, demanding the chief's release. With Arafat running out of manoeuvring room, Bush only added to the pressure, telling journalists in Washington that Arafat must bring "justice to those who would use terrorism as a weapon." It may be an impossible task, as a land where suicide bombings could already be planning their next bloody attack. **Ben Fennell**

BLOODSHED AND FUNERALS

A Palestinian journalist reflects on life and death in the West Bank and Gaza



Memorial candles for five young victims

For the more than three million Palestinians living on the West Bank and Gaza, life is filled with poverty. There are few jobs, the unemployed rate among young men is a staggering 30 per cent. And then there is the endless violence. And the people of Ramallah, a freelance Palestinian journalist who has lived in the occupied territories for seven years. With the highest unemployment, she has grown pessimistic about the prospects of peace with Israel. Last week, as Israel responded to a wave of suicide bombings with tanks and rockets, she filed this report from the West Bank city of Ramallah.

At 1 a.m. on Dec. 4, residents of Ramallah hurried nervously to an Israeli-secured zone speaking in Arabic. "You are under curfew. Stay in your houses. We will shoot violators," the soldier's voice

boomed over a loudspeaker mounted on an army vehicle that moved slowly through the street. Then came the roar of tanks, ripping up pavement and crushing flower beds as they smashed through the city—another Israeli invasion of Palestinian enclaves in the West Bank and Gaza was underway.

Escaping the worst is the town in this city of 235,000, 15 km north of Jerusalem. The night before, people prepared for the onslaught by stockpiling food and water. "We have power over nothing," said an exhausted Ashraf Zabneh, 38, co-owner of a supermarket in downtown Ramallah as he helped customers pack their shopping bags. "This is not about Israeli security. It is about our freedom."

The Israeli invasion of more than half-a-dozen towns and cities was accompa-

nied by missile attacks and tank fire, and came on the heels of a declaration of a "war on terrorism" by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. I hesitated to Sharon's television address to the Israeli people, in which he said Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat was his prime target in the war against "them." He never directly referred to the Palestinian people. To do so would have been an admission that the "other" has an identity, and that would have taken courage.

We live in a strangely never-ending cycle of violence. For the last two months, I have spent a lot of time waiting in my bathroom—it has no windows and is the only place I feel safe. The bloodshed just seems to get worse. On Dec. 1, two young Palestinians blew themselves up in a Jewish area of Jerusalem, killing 10 people in

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the process and wounding bystanders. A day later, another suicide bomber struck in Haifa, killing 16 aboard the bus on which he was riding. These attacks came just days after 12 Palestinians had been killed. Among the Palestinian dead were two women who were shot while sitting in their cars, and five children under the age of 14 who died when a land mine, placed under a public walkway, exploded as they were on their way to school. Is Israel fair in excusing for this, and for what they have done every day to Palestinians?

It was the Israeli assassination on Nov. 23 of Mohammed Abu Hamoud, a military leader with Hamas—the Islamic Resistance Movement—that set the tone for last week's round of violence. According to senior Palestinian peace negotiator Saeb Erekat, Hamas had said it would respect the ceasefire to which Arafat and Israel had agreed on Sept. 18. But when Israel assassinated Hamoud, Hamas officials immediately declared the ceasefire null and void and launched a wave of suicide bombings—the groups' trademark.

It is a sad testimony to any society when young people blow themselves and others into oblivion. It is painful to me, and to almost everyone. Although Palestinian society has been raped by the wrong, that does not excuse murder or suicide. But who can understand the depths of anger? Since Sept. 28, 2000, when the latest fighting began, 859 Palestinians have been killed, one-third under the age of 18. (During the same period, 250 Israelis were killed.) "The cost of liberating Palestine is very high," said Marwan Barghout, a member of Arafat's Fatah Party and a popular West Bank leader. "The pond of blood of the martyrs and tears of mothers burying their children is much larger than any state we can hope to have."

First words, but I see only the rocks and the funerals. Increasingly, Palestinians are tied up with Arafat's administration, which may see as much of a police force than a representative body—and one in collusion with the Israelis. That view was



An observation at a West Bank checkpoint

only reinforced when Arafat's police placed Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder of Hamas, under house arrest last week. "They spent all money arming themselves," said Nabeel Abdul, a computer scientist in Ramallah. "But when Israelis attack us, we feel unprotected."

The expressed Israeli desire to "terminate" Arafat's administration is seen by most Palestinians as an attempt to get more "moderate" leaders—namely the CIA-trained heads of the so-called "preventive security forces"—into place. These men, Jibril Rajoub in Ramallah and Mohammed Dahlan in Gaza, are widely viewed as potential Israeli proxies. As a result, Arafat, while shaky and not as popular as he once was, is still the most "representative" of Palestinian aspirations. "We want to have a state alongside the state of Israel," said Barghout. "We do not want to destroy Israel."

But the Israelis must know that their only guarantee of safety in the Arab world is making peace with the Palestinians. There is no other road to take. A just peace would help in the rehabilitation of violent elements like Hamas. But Ariel Sharon is trying to close that avenue. Arafat cannot stop him, but Hamas can—and they must. If they do not, the funerals will continue, on both sides.



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A NEW YORK LOVE-IN

In early December, Canadians descended on the Big Apple for a special weekend. Ottawa Bureau Chief John Geddes was our boy on the bus.

BY JOHN GEDDES

The Greyhound is just pulling out of an Ottawa mall parking lot when someone in the middle of the bus croons, "I love New York in June, how about you . . ." Nice voice. It's Jacques Mousaux, 73, a retired post-office supervisor. His wife, Margaret, 66, looks unimpressed with an apologetic smile that says "He's always like this." But nobody minds, even though it's just after 7 a.m. "We are part of the capital's bus brigade for the 'Canada loves New York' weekend, organized to take Mayor Rudolph Giuliani on his patch for tourism to return to his hometown city at the shock of Sept. 11 fides."

Our bus, one of four leaving Ottawa on Nov. 30, is not quite full. Retired people experienced to the ways of weekend tours claim most of the front three-quarters of the seats. The back five rows are asked out by a foursome of single, mid-level government employees. They take two seats each. Michelle Gauthier, 38, chafes enthusiastically about the Manhattan bus she checked out with a former boyfriend on a two-day visit eight years ago. Across the aisle is her friend Kent Johnson, 42, who completed the New York City Marathon in 1996. "When you run the marathon," he says, "you feel like the city is yours."

Behind him is Giselle Cousin, 36, who has a girlfriend in New York she hopes to hook up with for drinks that evening. And sprawled across the seat at the extreme rear is Carol Burnett, 33, who says when asked that too, she was not earned after the



TV comedienne, and admits she has never been to New York. She falls asleep soon after the bus gets going, and her friends remark that she'll be ready to party when they hit the big city.

There are "Canada loves New York" buses departing from Montreal and Toronto, too. The fare is \$99 round-trip, expensive hotel rooms in Manhattan, or even cheaper ones in New Jersey, are available with the package. For those with more to spend, discount Air Canada flights are being offered, along with accommodation at guest hotels. The whole thing was dreamed up by Liberal Senator Jerry Goodman. The main event will be a rally at the historic Radio City Ballroom, with the promise of Canadian entertainment, an appearance by Mayor Giuliani, and five Reds baseball caps.

It doesn't take much propping up to call up Sept. 11 in the minds of riders on our bus. "I was sitting outside my house on a beautiful day and my wife called out and said, 'A plane crashed into a building,'" Jacques recalls. "It changed our attitudes towards life, made us think about what

mates." He means family, friends, living life to the fullest. Nearly everyone I talk to on the tour drew some variation of that lesson from Sept. 11. The sort of people who found a deeper moral in the horror, I suppose, are the type to sign up for this kind of weekend.

Most want to go see the wreckage where the twin towers stood. But such grim thoughts are only an undercurrent on the bus. On the surface this feels like a quest, with an extra dimension from the hype that talks us into touching something bigger, maybe historic. The first glimpse of the famous skyline at dusk pulls everyone on the wrong side of the bus half out of their seats to peer out. There's the Empire State Building, once again the tallest in New York City. Then we dip down under the huge new American flag that hangs over the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel, which will disappear as finally in Manhattan.

Craving into that grid of streets and avenues is a pulse-quickening experience, no matter how often you've done it. Accessible as New York is for Canadians living in Quebec and Southern Ontario, it remains an adventure destination—just Dorothy's bright Oz, just Barnum's dark Gotham. The bus drops passengers at two centrally located Manhattan hotels. Jacques and Margaret jump out at the Thirtieth, where the rooms are tiny but well appointed. Kent, Michelle, Giselle and Carol are at Hotel Pennsylvania, where the lobby is impressive but the rooms are run-down.

No big deal. By 8:30 p.m., the quarter is showered, changed and striding with the



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Ottawa's Johnston, Gaudin, Corrado and Burnett (left to right) in an NYC state of mind

Friday night crowds up Seventh Avenue. The girls are calling themselves Cherish's Angels, relegating Kent to the supporting role of *Boleyn A-Sorel* musician gives them a funky sound track of warm-heavy electric guitar. They walk out under the outstaring gleam and glimmer of Times Square as if they own the place. Rather than institutionalized newsmen, New York has a way of bringing out the boldness. "Like, this is a way of thinking, eh?" says Carol. But she doesn't look overwhelmed. Just exhilarated.

Beneath the glare, Brensey Spean Peas billboard is a good place to think about the city. The Sept. 11 attacks redefined New York, at least temporarily, as a target—a place where unimaginable horror could happen. But at the end of Godard's transformation run as mayor, the city is now, for the casual visitor, much less scary than it was a few years ago. Here in Times Square, parents push toddlers in strollers through this throng. A decade ago, there was dirt, drug dealers. Now, there's a big new Toys "R Us. And Disney's *The Lion King* is play-

ing nearby on 42nd Street, where puerveyon of poets used to rule the block. The garbage bags flying the trash incinerators are a designer shade of mauve. The fumes of Godard's crackdown on crime shows in the way tourists walk comfortably where they once would have anxiously halted yellow cabs. The first friends head off to rendezvous at a bar with Gaudin's New York friend.

There's more to the notion of New York as an open-air place than Gaudin's good game. Before coming down, I called Renee Roman, the exceptional Canadian jazz pianist who is a fixture in the New York clubs. She told me about arriving here as a Vancouver kid in 1985 on a Canada Council grant. Within a year, she was the house piano player for late-night jazz sessions at the famed Blue Note. "We there are a combination of a rank newcomer to quickly carving out a prime place in the world's most competitive jazz scene!" The musician was incredibly welcoming, she recalls. In fact, she says the main thing she loves about New York is the way people

from all over the world can flood in and find their place. It's the old Statue of Liberty message, but she swears it holds true.

On Saturday morning, many of the Canada loves New York crowd are heading down to the site. Jacques and Margaret are up at 8 a.m. for breakfast, having spent a glorious night walking. They saw the Chateau at Rockefeller Center and watched the storm on the outdoor rink. (With a true Canadian eye, Jacques notes that the artificial ice looked a little soft in the unseasonably warm weather.) We meet up for a subway ride down to Grand Central with the back-of-the-bus gang.

Kent looks a little worse for wear but blasé. The four-piece ended up last night as a de facto band. The Backs' future, where the band was being urged to stage a tribute to George Harrison, who had died the previous day. They didn't know any of his songs—but Kent happens to be a pretty fix guitar player and a Beatles fanatic. Upped on by Carol, Michelle and Gaudin, and then strangers who picked up on what was going on, he performed *Let It Be* as the show's crowd's delight—and the band's away-

Canada and the World

ance. Telling me about it, his eyes light up. "I can't believe I played in a New York club."

We escape up from the subway at Fulton Street, and then between the low nondescript buildings at the scene we know as well from TV. Michael, rounded metal. Heaps of rubble. The still-standing portion of the facade, with those elongated gothic arches. People fall silent. Someone says, "Oh, my God." Carol pulls a full-sized Canadian flag out of her purse and hangs it over her shoulders. We get to within about a block and are stopped by a police barrier where dozens of others are snapping pictures. Jacques, ever pragmatic, is soon exchanging impressions with a stranger. Margaret is quieter. "Imagine this," she says after a while to no one in particular. "Terrible."

We glide up after trying to absorb something of the place. Walking back to the subway, a local woman, a Russian immigrant who works at a bank not far from where the World Trade Center towers used to be, offers this observation: "I can't look at it. I want to cry. For some people, it's like Disneyland, but I can't look at it." Later, I hear another New Yorker refer to the site bluntly as "the biggest amnesia we got."

The rally to that afternoon. It soon becomes obvious that not everyone is going to get in. By 1:30 p.m., when the doors are supposed to open, a police officer says he figures there are about 10,000 lined up. That includes hundreds who travelled down for the weekend and many Canadian identifiers to get past the door. But after VIPs and media are counted, the Roundell will hold only about 2,500 more. Jacques and Margaret are near the front of the line. Kent is not far behind them—but he's alone, having lost Michelle, Carol and Gaudin in the crowd at Grand Central. Still, he's sure they will somehow get in, and he's right. Just before the doors open, the three show up, slip into line near the front, and make the cut.



The New Yorkers close walking Grand Central

Trade, it's like a touring version of the Canada Day party on Parliament Hill. There's some good music. A couple of Cirque du Soleil acts. A mass of little Maple Leaf flags being waved and those free red-and-white Room caps "O Canada" gets sung—over. Also "God Bless America." The speeches go on too long, but Gaudin, although he looks tired, doesn't disappoint. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien gives a solid speech. Those who didn't make it inside but still hung around watch it all on a big video screen outside. By the time House, with Blue Rodeo still playing, the crowd is thinning fast.

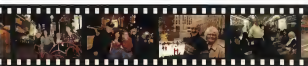
I have a destination in mind. Over on Park Avenue stands the Seagram Building, surely the most elegant skyscraper any Canadian has left on New York City. This Canadian is Pyralis Lambert. As a very young woman in the early 1950s, she persuaded her father, Samuel Bronfman, that his family's liquor empire should be a great, daring building. She chose Mies van der Rohe as the architect, and overrode the project until 1958. The result was a 38-story office tower of dark-wood glass and bronze details. It's a classic—first of New York's modern glass-and-steel skyscrapers, of which the World Trade Center towers were gargantuan examples.

Lambert, who is the founding director and chairwoman of the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, sold me about the excitement of New York in the

1950s. But she was not merely nostalgic; she still loves the city today. "Walking along the avenue is what's exciting," she said in an interview before the trip. "Going up 57th Street towards Carnegie Hall or up Fifth Avenue near Rockefeller Center. When you put your feet down, you know that thousands of highly talented people have put their foot down right there." She blew the energy, but on this Saturday night her Seagram Building stands serene on its wide plaza. It's a wonderful fusion of permanence and perfection, the opposite of what I saw that morning.

Jacques and Margaret find some calm at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, during an evening mass with wonderful music, and then indulge in a romantic late dinner at an Indian restaurant. Kent, Carol, Gaudin and Michelle find their way to a Chinese restaurant on the Lower East Side that offers a really rapid turnover and a transatlantic stage show. They don't get much sleep. So (they) lots to talk about on the bus Sunday morning. As the skyline recedes, everyone cranes around for a last look, trying to figure out where they were, using the Empire State and Chrysler buildings as landmarks. Strangely, even those who were visiting New York for the first time, who never saw the World Trade Center, are able to point out where the twin towers once stood.

See our online photo gallery of the event.
www.cbc.ca/photo



The anti-establishment CEO

Business

What's this? A business baron who actually likes taxes? Dominic D'Alessandro breaks the mould.

BY KATHERINE MACKLEM

At a recent family dinner, Dominic D'Alessandro got into a heated discussion with his two sons. They were talking about taxes, and D'Alessandro, as most, one of Canada's most prominent business leaders, was taking the unlikely position that taxes are a good thing. Canadian society is very generous, he learned his sons, who are both grown. It allows citizens to realize their full potential. He was speaking from experience—he likes to tell people he's been favoured with "God knows how many" opportunities. "If it's not people like myself who are going to pay the tax," D'Alessandro adds, recalling the dinner conversation, "then who is?"

People like D'Alessandro are, of course, the very wealthy, the privileged few who live in the leafiest neighbourhoods and belong to the country's most exclusive clubs. He qualifies easily. For a brief moment, he was Canada's top-grossing broker. It was in 1993, his last year as head of Laurentian Bank—one of Canada's smallest domestic banks—and he made \$3.5 million. The following year, he became chief executive of Manulife Financial Corp., one of the country's largest insurance companies—and he's been the highest-paid CEO of a life insurance company in Canada ever since. Last year, he received a compensation package worth \$28.8 million, a sum well above all of Canada's top-grossing bankers. D'Alessandro lives in an elegant home, complete with his personal art collection, in Toronto's upper-crust Rosedale neighbourhood and owns an orchard on the shores of Lake St-Louis on the West Island of Montreal.

Yet, unlike many of his peers, D'Alessandro was not born to the class. In 1950, he emigrated with his parents to Canada from Melegnano in central Italy and settled in Montreal. Three years later, when D'Alessandro was 6, his father was suddenly killed in an accident at a construction site, leaving his mother, still not conversant in French or English, to care for her three sons and a daughter. She took in boarders, and her eldest boy, Nicholas, left school early to

work and support the family. They lived in Little Burgundy, a rough-and-rambolic community of two- and three-story tenets, cold-water walk-ups. D'Alessandro is impressive not simply because he's made his money—and a name for himself—in business, but because he's done it in the business of financial services, a field dominated by WASPy private-school establishment types. He's powerful, he's widely respected and as soon as the money dance among the country's banks and insurance companies begins in earnest—which could be as early as next month—he, and Manulife, will be very much in the midst of the swirl.

At 54, D'Alessandro is a short, compact man with a grey and passionate edge that, like his views on taxes, sets him apart from the corporate crowd. "You meet very few like him with that depth of fervour and love of the country," says Tom Kinnas, a friend and a Manulife board member. D'Alessandro says his political bias, which he describes as left of centre, is a product of his environment. "My background was such that I was more sympathetic to the underclass, or the underdog, than you would expect today," he says with a chuckle, recalling what he was like during his university days. "It was during the Vietnam War," he says. "I had long hair and I did the pot thing and the protest. It wasn't unusual—everyone did it. You know, I wasn't an establishment guy at all."

But he was always good with numbers. Today, D'Alessandro has a reputation for stellar business acumen, and even those who don't like him—and there are a fair number—have a grudging respect for his lightning-quick study of business situations. Like a master chess player, he sees earlier than most where the best business moves are, says William Buendell, chairman of Manulife's board from 1994 to 1998 and a member of the search committee that hired D'Alessandro. "He has a level of passion and conviction that you like to see in a CEO," Buendell says. He is an art collector, a voracious reader and an occasional golfer. Aside from those interests and his family (he and Pearl, his wife of 36

The Manulife chief with sculptures he commissioned at his Toronto headquarters

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Business

years, also have a daughter, now in university, he is devoted to his work.

His dove and fence-sitter stance with a price they smile into a difficult race to work for, says those who know him. Asked to describe D'Alessandro's management style, Blundell laughs lightly: "improving," he says. D'Alessandro is now more willing to "not intervene," Blundell says, politely referring to the CEO's controlling nature. A former employee adds: "He always set the bar very high. Once you'd cleared it, he'd raise it even higher." D'Alessandro admits he's very demanding. "I don't apologize for it. For me there's nothing of people who work with me than I am of myself."

Consolidation in the financial services industry will likely start with the insurance companies. Right now, there's a concentration on takeovers of publicly traded insurers. Finance Minister Paul Martin put it in place as part of his overhaul of financial services legislation to give these businesses—most of which had recently transferred into public companies from mutually owned ones—a bit of breathing room. On Jan. 1, the transaction will be lifted for the mid-sized companies—making them prime takeover targets. Attention is focused on Canada Life Financial Corp. and Canada Life Insurance Co. Among the potential buyers are the larger Canadian life insurance companies, namely Manulife, its closest competitor, Toronto-based Sun Life Financial Services of Canada Inc., and Whiting-Pearce-based Geni-Wat Life Inc., which is controlled by Power Corp., the multi-ventured Montreal conglomerate. The major Canadian banks and foreign financial giants are also on the list.

No one can predict the final outcome, especially since Sept. 11 turned much of the business world upside down. But for many, now, barriers and insurance-revenue have all been snapping "what-if" scenarios in a quiet, behind-the-scenes closing ritual. D'Alessandro included.

"This is a wonderful company—we would be an attractive partner for many financial institutions," he says, not one for false modesty. Manulife, he adds, has been approached by "everybody."

D'Alessandro hasn't been sitting idly by. Early on, Manulife struggled up to Canada Life, quietly buying a piece of its

smaller competitor. It holds 7.9 per cent of Canada Life shares, a stake worth \$560 million today. The investment is risky, says analyst Colin Devine of Salomon Smith Barney, because it put a major price of Manulife's capital into one pot. "It was just a gamble, to be honest," Devine says. Others see the move as brilliant. If Manulife ends up the buyer of Canada Life, it will have acquired a good-sized portion of the company at a probable discount. If a competitor takes over Canada Life, it will have to buy out Manulife at a premium. D'Alessandro calls the stake an investment opportunity. "We know that if we had a stake, it would position us to make a decision," he says. "It would just allow us to be a player if we wanted to be a player. We didn't see a downside."

No stable business downside, perhaps, but D'Alessandro may have nudged some important political feathers. Sources say the finance minister was not too pleased to learn of the investment through the news media. Since the two merger strategies by the five major Canadian banks, the subject of consolidation has been rocky in Ottawa. Martin was furious when the Bank of Montreal-Royal Bank of Canada merger announcement took him by surprise in 1998. Later, he and his deputy minister Kevin Lynch have made it their mission to warn everyone in the business to sit on their hands and do nothing without first talking to them. According to one insider, they're not even saying a publicly Consolidation with a good Martin is a good thing to trumpet these days, given the rapid response it gets from the public—especially when he's conducting an underdog leadership campaign.

D'Alessandro is undaunted. "There's going to be, I believe, a restructuring. Certainly in the insurance industry, first, and possibly followed by the banking industry," he states. D'Alessandro, who has solid connections to both Martin and Jean Chrétien, understands the politics would be murky if Manulife were to propose trying the hand with one of the big banks (see latest scenario *avoiding a merger between Manulife and the Bank of Nova Scotia*). As a matter of policy, Martin says he won't allow a merger between any of the large insurance companies and one of the large banks, on grounds it would hamper domestic com-

petition. D'Alessandro sees that as a temporary stance—and one that won't interfere with his ambition for Manulife. The company, already a force on the international stage, could eventually compete with the world's largest and most powerful insurance behemoths, D'Alessandro says. Before that, he'll have to conquer Canada. "In a few years' time, governments will be less sensitive to the issue of whether or not the insurance industry should be co-mingled with the banks, he predicts. "In due course, they will allow a big insurance company and a big bank to come together."

D'Alessandro has been laying the groundwork to make that happen, arguably his entire career. While in his 30s, he was the youngest-ever executive vice-president at Royal Bank. When a call came in 1988 picking the top job at Montreal-based Laurentian, D'Alessandro jumped at the chance, even though it was a smaller institution and over three times his age. Canada's largest bank, considered him a possible future CEO. Things moved slowly at a big bank, including career, and D'Alessandro has been in a hurry his whole life. (He finished high school at 14, having skipped two grades.) In 1993, Laurentian was taken over by Quebec's Desjardins Group and D'Alessandro, who speaks fluent French, English and Italian, decided to cash in his options and flee the nationalistic politics of the bank's new owners. Besides, he'd been asked by headquarters for Manulife's top job.

He has been at Manulife's helm for almost eight years, now—his period marked by massive upheaval for insurers. Within months of D'Alessandro's arrival in Toronto to take the job, \$19-billion Consolidation Life Insurance Co. collapsed, sending shock waves through the industry. That failure, and others, triggered a string of takeovers, including Manulife picking up some Canfield holdings. Then came the demerger of Sun Life. To make themselves both more attractive to potential buyers and more agile in an environment of consolidation, five of Canada's largest life companies, owned by policyholders, transferred themselves into shareholder-owned entities. Manulife was second on the list, after Sun Life, merging \$2.5 billion in 1999—then a record-sized IPO in Canada. Almost overnight, a new class of equities—

dividing bank stocks—was added to the marketplace, with a combined value now of \$52 billion. Analysts see further consolidation in Canada as the means for the insurers to bulk up before seeking a greater footing in the covered U.S. market.

D'Alessandro has led Manulife through its transformation from a sleepy, provincial, mutual life company to a dynamic stock player. His push for growth in Asia, particularly in Japan and China. Today, roughly a quarter of Manulife's business is in Canada, about half is U.S.-based, and the rest comes from around the world. Under D'Alessandro, the company's return on equity—a ratio used by financial firms to measure efficiency—more than doubled and Manulife became the first insurer in Canada to break the billion-dollar-profit mark. \$1.48 billion last year. Like most other insurance companies, Manulife took a financial hit with the terrorist attacks in the U.S.—it booked a \$150-million charge related directly to the disaster (unusually normalcy in the "United States"). The slowing economy has also taken a toll, and its third-quarter profits were down 21 per cent. "The business environment has been difficult," D'Alessandro says. "People are less confident than they were." Still, D'Alessandro is "reasonably positive" the economy, and the insurance industry, will emerge from the current slowdown sometime next year.

Although he's caught up in his world of mergers, D'Alessandro hasn't forgotten the "difficult dad," he firmly endured in the 1950s after his father died. His mother remarried and left Lucio Berpady when he was in his teens. She's now 85 and, according to D'Alessandro, "amazing," though still not very fluent in English or French. She lives upstairs from his sister in a Montreal duplex. His brother Nicholas is a Montreal taxi driver. D'Alessandro supports his own sons—golf pro Anthony, 31, and budding financial analyst Michael, 27—again with him over: too just to go his just. "I don't know if they do it for me, but I think they position that I don't step on with on a whole range of means," he says. Thus, again, he knows that just like their father, his privileged kids are a product of their environment.

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Donald Cox

Why prices are falling

What's the most important determinant of long-term investment results? I think it's changes in the price system, relative to what people expected. Like all generalizations, that statement can be understood more easily by looking at extremes. First, when inflation is far higher than anticipated (as was the case during the stagflationary Seventies), commodities outperform stocks, which outperform bonds. Second, when inflation is far lower than anticipated, long-term bonds outperform stocks, which outperform commodities. Third, when outright deflation hits (as in Japan since 1993), long-term bonds are the only attractive asset class.

That deflationary condition could occur in North America any given time. The now-used writing program, Microsoft Word, didn't even admit that "deflationary" was a word until a very recent revision.

Those of us who have for years been warning of the likelihood of deflation have encountered harassment, disbelief and/or ridicule. Haven't we always had inflation? Isn't it the basic disease of democracy? The answer to both questions is no. We have about a thousand years of price records for Europe and, in recent centuries, the United States and Japan. They show that the longest period of sustained inflation began in 1935, peaked in the 1970s, and has been in more or less continuous decline since 1982. During that inflationary era, inflation was overwhelmingly correlated to war and preparation for war. Examples range from Britain's hyperinflation between 1914 and 1917, except for the last year of the Napoleonic Wars, the Canadian War, the U.S. Civil War, and the Franco-Prussian War. Wars raise prices, particularly for commodities, sharply higher. Each war was followed by postwar deflation, driving prices back down to where the cycle began.

Because the Second World War was followed immediately by the Cold War, we did not experience postwar deflation. Then, during the 1960s and 1970s, we overtook those war cases with big-government tax-and-spend liberalism that requires central bankers to finance by printing money. The result was double-digit inflation. (As Milton Friedman showed, inflation is primarily a monetary phenomenon.) With the end of the Cold War, we were ready for a sustained drop in inflation. It came after the brief delay of the Gulf War. Central bankers had learned their lessons well, and they pursued monetarism. Meanwhile, the civilian economy experienced falling prices because of (1) Moore's Law, which dictated that the power of a chip doubles in roughly 18 months, giving

the global economy sustained productivity gains, and (2) the rise of East Asia in world trade. At first, exports from Japan and the so-called Tigers hammered down global prices. Then China, headed by Deng Xiaoping from its Marxist origins, became the most formidable force. In 2000, it displaced Japan as the biggest contributor to the U.S. trade deficit.

Deflation has shown its muscle in commodity prices. Canadian investors are painfully familiar with the declines in energy, forest products and metals recently. The biggest price plague has been the pre-eminent commodity of the information economy—the computer memory chip, which was down as much as 68 per cent this year before recovering modestly.

You've noticed the deflation in automobile pricing: not all the price cutting has been in finance charges. For North American-made vehicles, deflationary bargains set the rule. So why does the inflation rate keep going up? Answer: prices for goods and services proceed locally, or by governments, keep rising. Gas, food, health care, rent, tolls, tickets, college tuition, lawyers' fees, restaurant meals and other items are not subject to fine-tune trade still hold their own or climb. In a service economy, those transactions outweigh the effects of cost cutting from competition abroad.

Still, these deflationary pressures have a major impact on investments. Shares of manufacturing and technology companies are obvious examples. Long-term bond yields look low compared to recent history, but they're still (relatively-adjusted) yields are once again appealing after that major bond market sell-off in November. The bond bear suddenly returned because investors concluded a strong U.S. recovery was coming, bringing with it, they feared, inflation and higher long-term interest rates. That worry, paradoxically, undermined the attractiveness of stocks. U.S. consumers and corporations need lower long-term rates to manage their borrowing debt burdens. If bonds are bad, stocks at current prices are worse.

To me, the only threat of sustained inflation comes from the Middle East. If a large, lengthy, costly war erupts there, inflationary pressures could return. If not, bonds are a buy.

The stock market clings a well of worry. Inflation is yesterday's Big Worry. Today's are terrorism and recession. If worry wars worry about the real problems, bonds will rally, strengthening the economy, thereby raising stocks once again attractive. Worry sells.

Donald Cox is chairman of Harris Investment Management in Chicago and Toronto-based Jean Howard Investments

Smith captures Muhammad Ali with uncanny fidelity in an inspirational tribute worthy of its hero



LORDS OF THE RING

Hollywood's heavyweight contenders square off for the Christmas box office

As the aircraft banked sharply over Lower Manhattan, passengers craned their necks, scanning the late-afternoon haze for a sign of something not there. The phantom towers. Even in its wounded state, this city is still a place of convergence, perhaps more now than ever. It was the eve of the "Canada loves New York" weekend, but I'd come to witness an invasion of a different order. Hollywood was descending on New York City to unveil half a dozen holiday movies. They were filmed before Sept. 11. But as the Downtown Factory rips into the singular, fantasy keeps colliding with reality—in Ali's tale of an African-American who refuses to fight a foreign enemy in *Vertical Sky's* an-



age of man free-falling from a Manhattan office tower; and even in *The Lord of the Rings*, the story of a war against cave-dwelling forces of evil that opens with the line, "The world has changed."

In the course of a week, I saw pictures about a Muslim boxer, a holder crusader,

a crazed Manhattan media mogul, a paranoid Nobel Prize winner, a nervous Vietnam vet and a retro English manor full of sinister aspects. I came home with a mountain of swag, including three souvenir books, a Guinness goblet that glows in the dark, a board game, a clock and an Ali boxing robe. I also interviewed directors ranging from Michael Mann to Robert Altman, and actors from Will Smith to Tom Cruise—although, through an unexpected quirk of Hollywood logic, Cruise met me only later in Tennessee, after declining to speak to the press media in New York. Even then, it was impossible to talk about his role in *Vertical Sky*, as a fallen prince of Manhattan, without mentioning to



Whether it's frightened hobbits trying to hide, a wizard lost in a mine, or ferocious orcs, *The Lord of the Rings* is dark and dramatic fare



the *alley of the city held just left. The film, and Cruise, "is about waking up from a dream, and when you see what's occurred it's very relevant. It's as if the social screen has been ripped off society and you're looking at what's really going on."*

Michael Mann's *Ali* previewed at the Zaigfeld Theatre, a grand old mid-century cinema. I remember among these rare years ago, watching *The Last of the Mohicans*, another Mann picture, and glimpsing a large cut deer across the aisle—which seemed no stronger than watching Daniel Day-Lewis in bedouin and a bull across. *Mohicans* was Mann's least auspicious moment. But *Ali* is a triumph. The director who created TV's *Miami Vice*, the hallmarks of '80s gloss, has found a subject that can hold up to his style. A lyrical, inspirational portrait of a man who called himself the Greatest, *Ali* is a movie truly worthy of its hero, and deserves the bluffs that critics will find inevitable: it's a knockout.

In a culture that's redefining heroism, it also has a profound resonance. Its story of a Muslim who risked everything by refusing to go to war recalls a time when integrity and patriotism in America were far from synonymous. Mann dramatizes a decade of Muhammad Ali's life that coincides with the upheaval of the Sixties. The movie begins in 1966, when the Beatles were invading America, America was invading Vietnam—and Ali, then a 22-year-old contender named Cassius Clay, de-

fied Sonny Liston for the heavyweight championship. The story concludes in 1974, the year the war wound down, Nixon resigned and Ali regained the championship by knocking out George Foreman in Zaire's farnago "Rumble in the Jungle." In between, Ali converts to Islam, careers through several marriages, is convicted for raising the draft, stepped off his title, then stages one of the most dramatic comebacks in sports history after being exonerated by the Supreme Court.

Stealing the clichés of the biopic, *Ali* avoids detailed exposition. It raises more questions than it answers. And although *Ali* was one of the movie's athletes in history—he invented trash talk—Mann popples the story with music and images more than words. The first quarter hour plays like an overture, announcing a midtown performance by soul singer Sam Cooke in a Chicago nightclub with shots of Ali jogging at night and training in the gym, his face a blue against the bag. Mann's impressionistic direction seems to mimic Ali's rhythm in the ring. He dances and feints around his subject, refusing to pound home the obvious. And when Ali's words are finally unleashed, they fall like a volley of lightning punches.

In the film's generous fight scenes, Mann also injects new life into a dead genre. And he has assembled a dynamic cast. Jon Voight's worn portrayal of broadcaster Howard Cosell avoids the pitfalls of easy caricature, Mario Van Peebles brings a

quest conversion to Malcolm X, and a flamboyant James Fox weighs in as Ali's mother-in-law, Dave (Shandi) Brown.

Smith, meanwhile, captures Ali with uncanny fidelity from his physique to the cadence of his speech. But what elevates his performance is the emotion that he brings to the stretches of reflective silence—in when Ali stops to gaze at a primitive mural of himself while jogging through Zaire's capital. Denzel Washington was twice chased of an Academy Award for playing black American scenes, in *Malcolm X* (1992) and then *The Hurricane* (1999). But with *Ali*, Smith is a serious Oscar contender, especially when he considers Ali is a more palatable hero than either Malcolm X or Hurricane Carter.

"He's also political," says Mann. "Ali avoided the details of political positions the same way Bob Dylan did. Of course Dylan was against the war. But he was not going to be made into the poster boy for the movement." Mann, who made the film with his subject's blessing, says that, at 58, he's just a year younger than Ali, "so a newcast in 1967 that arranged him annoyed me. And I grew up in Chicago, so I knew what 7th Street was like when Ali was rocking down to the Tiger Lounge."

Serving for authenticity, Mann also put Smith through a year of training before the shots—with the boxer's legendary trainer, Angelo Dundee, in charge. "Let's not tell you that, but I could have been a fighter," says Dundee, 78, who joined the promotional



Crowe is a genius in *A Beautiful Mind*, and Cheesey wooes Roberts in *Ocean's Eleven*



fight in New York. "Will Smith's an athlete. Muhammad was nothing. He was never an athlete. All he could do is fight. But he worked as hard as he talked later on in life. Will Smith could dance. Muhammad couldn't dance a lick. The only dancing he did was in the ring."

A bodyguard with a bulge in his suit keeps men watch outside Smith's hotel room. But the 33-year-old actor looks like he can take care of himself. His toned physique is still in fighting trim, biceps swelling under a maroon turtleneck. And the transformation is more than physical. Smith said he's a man growing with possibility. *Ali* has changed his life.

For the Zaire scenes, which were shot in Mozambique, he visited Africa for the first time and "it was an awakening," he says. "God runs everywhere else, but God lives in Africa." Smith remembers telling the president of Mozambique, "It feels so weird to be in a country where, if Michael Mann and I get into a fight, the police are going to come and shoot *him*." To be in a country where "everybody is black," he adds, "gives you a sense of your potential, whereas *Ali* had to say he was pretty, he had to say he was the prince, so an affirmation against the presence of colonialism."

Although *Ali* disobeyed his country's call to arms, Smith calls him "divinely poetic." "The love of the land are designed in order that a Muhammad *Ali* is permitted to exist in a divided-and-balance system for our government," says Smith, beginning to sound more like a statesman than an actor. In fact, he has asked United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan about getting a position with the UN—"I have a lot of energy and I want the world to be different because I was here."

Whining for the elevator, Smith does a

quick *Ali* dance, a lightning shuffle. Then, as his handlers hustle him off to the next round of media, he says, "I'm so ready!"

At the odyssey of a real-life lord of the ring, is the real heavyweight in Hollywood: Cinema lineup. But the blockbuster is *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, an epic fantasy based on the first book in J. R. R. Tolkien's *Hoovering trilogy*. It's the first of three *Ring* features that were shot simultaneously (an unprecedented act of Hollywood faith) and will be released annually. But the risk is calculated. Since its publication in the '50s, the Tolkien saga has drawn more than 100 million readers, ensuring a fan base of several generations. The movie is also the season's one action contemporary. After *Harry Potter's* cozy spectacle of unfettered wizardry, *The Lord of the Rings* is darker, more dramatic fare. Too violent for small children—and, at almost three hours, too long—it has enough genre-effects for teens seeking a fix of *Matrix* adrenaline.

The movie condenses Tolkien's Byzantine narrative but visualizes his Middle-earth with loving, obsessive detail. The story follows the quest of Frodo (Elijah Wood), a 34-year-old hobbit who inherits a magic ring couched by the forces of darkness, who would use it to conquer and enslave the good folk of Middle-earth. So Frodo embarks on a perilous trek, hoping to destroy the ring by throwing it into the fires of Mount Doom, where it was forged by the dark lord Sauron. His allies include his halfling pals, the wizard Gandalf (Sir Ian McKellen), the dwarf Gimli (John Rhys-Davies), the warrior Aragorn (Viggo Mortensen), and off-spring (Ian Tiley and Cate Blanchett). They fend off a wild legion of orcs, from the hideous ones to the tentacle-like ringwraiths.

The movie sometimes feels overwrought—the battles are relentless—but it has genuine passion. By combining exotic locations in his New Zealand homeland with digital dreamscapes, director Peter Jackson crosses a storybook world with its own awful reality. He plays with the palette, bleaching the colour out of a number of sequences—except for the arid eyes of his hero, and Wood has the wisest, bluest eyes of anyone since Lieke Taylor. As the ring-bearer in an epic marriage between Tolkien mythology and Hollywood machinery, he serves as the film's emotional centre. And he makes a more fragile, vulnerable hero than the self-manifested kid in *Harry Potter*.

But Mortensen is the Elfin revelation. A last-minute addition to the cast, he projects an intense Viking charisma. The 33-year-old actor, who had a tooth knocked out in a bar fight scene, says Jackson's shoot was arduous, and often dangerous. "At one point," he recalls, "we did three months of straight night-shooting on wet, rocky slopes. But out of the chaos and desperation, the education and injury, unusual things happen and end up on film." If Spielberg had been doing this, it would have cost twice as much and looked less lyrical, more comfortable.

Jackson shows up for an interview in a polo shirt, shorts and a bare foot. Ashen, ratty-poly man with a crazy tangle of dark hair, a bushy beard and many eyes during behind-the-scenes glances, he looks more like a hobbit than the ones in the film. And he seems an unlikely anguisher for the more ambitious movie project since *Twelve*. "If you were estimating \$270 million (U.S.) to make three movies, you wouldn't choose me," he admits.

But for Jackson, 40, *LOTR* marks the climax of an odyssey that began at the age

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Films

of 19, when he saw the original *King Kong* and fell in love with movies. At 12, he shot his own stop-motion *Jurassic Park* with plasticine dinosaurs and a Super-8 camera. After launching his career with splatter films, he revealed his artistic brilliance with *Heavenly Creatures* (1994), Kate Winslet's screen debut. And now, with *LOTR*, he has made the great literary monster movie.

Inevitably, *LOTR* will be compared with that other blockbuster based on an English book about an orphan hero who becomes a sorcerer's apprentice. "But I've always had fond feelings towards *Harry Potter*," says Jackson. "The rivalry between us is mainly an invention of these big fan bases on the Internet. Nothing strengthens our position from a purely cold-blooded financial point of view more than *Harry Potter*'s success. If people go see it and there's been about fantasy and wizards, they have a year to wait for the next *Harry Potter*, but we're coming along four weeks later."

Like *Peter*, *LOTR* forges an unlikely alliance between a distinguished international cast and cross-Hollywood merchandising. Jackson, however, shrugs off the commercialism as the simple cost of doing business. McKellen, meanwhile, is tickled that he has become both an action figure and an image on a New Zealand stamp.

"Everyone sending a Christmas card from New Zealand is going to tick our backsides," he chortles. "Can you believe that? There are not many people alive who are on a stamp and a Burger King cup." McKellen adds that he received an e-mail from a friend saying, "I can't believe that an openly gay man is being given away with hamburgers."

While *LOTR* and *Harry Potter* feature some of Hollywood's finest actors, American director Robert Altman has marshaled the most impressive brigade of Brit talent for the grandest shenanigans of *Goatland Park*. Filming in England for the first time in his 40-year career, Altman combined a sprawling cast and a small budget to create an upstart-downstart murder mystery set at a country manor in 1932. The film is a *What Woe of English* deep-sea—including Maggie Smith, Helen Mirren, Emily Watson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Clive Owen, Alan Bates, Jeremy Northam, Michael Gambon and Richard E. Grant.

Like a sepi-toned, droll-conscious *Clue*, the movie is a comedy of manner that ensues into a belated murder mystery. In 19, when he saw the original *King Kong* and fell in love with movies. At 12, he shot his own stop-motion *Jurassic Park* with plasticine dinosaurs and a Super-8 camera. After launching his career with splatter films, he revealed his artistic brilliance with *Heavenly Creatures* (1994), Kate Winslet's screen debut. And now, with *LOTR*, he has made the great literary monster movie.



Goatland Park unfolds from the viewpoint of the butlers, valets, maids and footmen

its characters converge at a mansion called *Goatland Park* for a shooting party hosted by an ill-tempered baronet (Gambon) and his unobtainable wife (Scott Thomas). The guests range from a world-weary countess, played with drill humor by Smith, to hot Norella, a vain matinee idol played by the ever-quirky Northam. Norella is the one real-life character in the film, the star of *Cherise Clain in London*—an actual movie being mounted by a fictitious American producer (*Goatland Park* co-producer Bob Balaban).

The movie's murder plot almost seems beside the point, just another conceit in the vintage fabric of the film. The story leads the narrative tension to sustain the film's 2½ hours. And you almost need a program to follow the players. But within *Goatland Park* is an intricate backdrop of glimmering performances. The action unfolds from the viewpoint of the butlers, valets, maids and footmen who work "backstage" in the bowels of the mansion. And what clearly fascinates Altman are the casual nuances of hierarchy, not just between servants and masters, but within both classes.

As a New York screener, I found myself drifting in and out of *Goatland Park*, sensing that there was more to the movie than met the eye. But Altman says, "You have to see this picture twice to get it." Although that seems a lot to ask, he may be right.

Altman is sick with the flu. The 76-year-old director ends up canceling most of his interviews in New York, but makes it to an early roundtable session with a group of press-junkie journalists. It's been a while

since I attended one of these, and they can be frustrating at the best of times. But at this session, three of the *five American* journalists at the table type Altman's words on laptops while he talks. A new style in fast-food reporting.

Slipping tea with honey, Altman says he cooked up *Goatland Park* with Balaban because he'd never done a whodunit. "I'm not much of an original film artist," he says. "McGale & Mr. Miller is the most taste western story ever done. But I like to get a grin and turn it a bit. This wasn't going to be a whodunit, but a who-cause-whodunit. Once you know all that stuff, then you can look into the corners, and that's where the film is. Like a magician, I bring your attention over here while it's something going on over there."

Calling *Goatland Park* "the best experience I've ever had in filmmaking," Altman says, "This picture couldn't have been done in America for a billion dollars. Because you couldn't get an actor of the quality of Alan Bates to come to work for us or a lot of 10 weeks without a line to say—he was in the background, a minor part. The Brits are incredible players. They are all workaholics." And Altman is an actor's director. Once a movie is cast, he says, "I don't have much to do, except at first so everybody has a focus point. The actors do it, I don't direct. I applaud."

For a sick man, Altman seems uncharacteristically mellow. But when asked about TV's version of his film *MASH*, he displays some of the old vitriol. Condemning the show for portraying *MASH* as the bad guys, he says, "It was on American TV every I—right for 12 years, and if

that isn't the worst kind of irresponsible propaganda I don't know what is."
 "So what are you doing next?" ventures one of the judges.
 "I'm going to the loo to throw up."

As a candidate who shuffles credible players, and disdains the obvious, Altman offers an antidote to Hollywood formula, which typically involves a single hero trying to overcome the odds. A *Beautiful Mind* is a formula movie about a man who gets lost in a maze of formulae. Based on a true story, it's an earnest drama about John Nash Jr. (Russell Crowe), a mathematician genius who made a breakthrough in the 1940s in his pioneering work in game theory.

Hollywood always has trouble depicting genius. Under the soft direction of Ron Howard (April 18), this film tries to portray it with glimpses of algebraic number jumble on the blackboard. And a glosses over Nash's erratic moments with a scene in a bar about how to pick up a blond. By the time we learn his theory has become a vital key to modern labor relations and international trade, it would have been nice to know what the hell it was about.

The film focuses on Nash's slide into madness, as he becomes convinced that his decoding Soviet spy messages hidden in the news media for a top-secret CIA project. But it's hard to buy delusions in the form of both-and-blood action—namely Ed Harris, who plays Nash's craggy angst-ridden CIA agent vice. Crowe captures the idiosyncrasies of a gladiator engaged in the tug with his own demons, while Jennifer Connelly plays his loyal, long-suffering wife. *Beautiful Mind* gives us a glimpse of an extraordinary story, but Howard's attempt to distill noble virtue from a complex life seems false. And compared with *Ali*'s 10-year roller-coaster of ease, fall and comeback, the story of a mind gradually piecing itself back together over several decades seems far dramatic effort.

Nashville is another routine about a man unburied. For this remake of Alexander Azarov's 1997 Spanish thriller, *After the Rain* (Q: Open Line), writer-director Cameron Crowe (*About a Boy*) co-stars with Toni Gatti. His son in *Jerry Maguire*, who serves as co-producer. And



Usable couple Crowe and Connelly display a certain chemistry in Kevin Smith's sex scene

Andie MacDowell reprises her role from the original film. Since the shoot, Crowe & Connelly have declared themselves a couple, and in their love scene you can detect some chemistry, certainly more than was visible between Crowe and Nicole Kidman in *Eyn Wilder*. She's an odd transition—from *Eyn Wilder* to *Open Line*, another movie about a man of the universe who is ruined by sexual obsession.

Opening and closing above the rooftops of Manhattan, the film toggles between reality and drama, with a deeper sci-fi subplot. Crowe runs as a New York playboy who runs a publishing empire. After meeting the girl of his dreams (Crowe), a man with a spurned lover (Cameron Crowe) leaves him horribly disgraced. Well, not as disgraced to the character in the original film—actual lookalike Tom Cruise. While often copying the original with dogged fidelity, the remake adds a nifty overlay of pop culture. And there are some resonances, as when Crowe's character says George Harrison is his favorite Beatle.

Crowe is an intensely physical actor, who seems to film more as just getting out of bed than most people do at the gym. He's a natural performer who makes thinking look like a muscular activity. And in person, Crowe exhibits the same torqued focus. Striving with Crowe in a Toronto hotel room, an athlete with his coach, he deflates goated answers, with phrases like "finding your own humanity to tell a love story." He's careful to distinguish between himself ("I have a lot of responsibility")

and his character ("overboard through life"). And asked about his love scene with Crowe, he agrees it's the most tender he's done. "I'm very proud of it. That's what Cameron wanted, that real intimacy." Later I meet Crowe, who praises Crowe's ability "to capture the little moments" and delivers model answers about *Toni*. "I was amazed by his energy," she says, recalling their first meeting. "And what I like is that he doesn't take for granted what he has."

Cameron Crowe is the assistant editor, although it's a distant cousin to the original. Translating the notion of a techno heir to contemporary Las Vegas, Steven Soderbergh assembled a mock Rat Pack that includes George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Matt Damon, with a cold-eyed Andy Garcia as the casino boss and Julia Roberts as his wife. The movie is critically watchable. Soderbergh directs in Starbucks smooth, the sound track cooler-than-thou and the best is a high-tech link. But what's missing is the gaily pleasure of the original, which was so bad it was good.

Soderbergh is incapable of vulgarity. Even with Elliot Gould and Paul Reiser trading jokes in broad daylight, the movie is so well behaved. Aside from Pitt, Garcia and Roberts, the cast is on course control. And the romance between Clooney and Roberts falls flat. In the end, *Casino* gives a ratty but makes us nostalgic for the real legacy of the Rat Pack, and for a Las Vegas that—like Hollywood—has been overruled by therapeutic fantasy.

Acting like a child

Made Rendell got his first taste of the spotlight nine years ago coverage at Toronto's Alton Towers Public School in a lip-synching competition. Dressed as a spider, Rendell, then four years old, brought the crowd to their feet with his rendition of *Hey Baby Spider*. "My dad jokes that this was my acting debut," says Rendell, now 13. "I didn't even move my lips. I just ran up and down a ladder."

Rendell's skills vary improved and two years ago, when he auditioned for Toronto's Princess of Wales stage production of *Oliver*, he landed three roles in the musical, including understudy to the lead. In Rendell's next project, he'll lead. He plays Bassian, a child adventurer, in *Tales from the Neverending Story*—a TV series, based on the 1984 children film, which premieres on The Movie Network on Christmas Day. "I loved the movie," says Rendell, "so it was incredible getting this part."

Even without formal training, Rendell is a quick study. "The toughest part has been looking before in the emotional scenes," he says, before adding, confidently, "I'm already past about becoming the character." Turns out the spider performance was just Rendell's introduction to method acting.



Person of purpose

Harry Belafonte has an older mother for being a performer. "The purpose of art is not just to show life as it is," says the 74-year-old, "but to show life as it should be." A musician leader for the United States Navy during the Second World War, Belafonte moved home to a country less apart by segregation. Since then, he found his way into acting and then became a musician, film and television actor. "You have to stand away from politics, Belafonte used his success in entertainment as a platform for civil rights. At the time, he found himself surrounded by 'people of purpose' like Martin



Swank talks *Boys* and the ups and downs of Oscar

A boy, countless, cop and spacegal

Actors make their living pretending to be other people. But Hilary Swank has shown a talent for playing characters who themselves are not what they appear to be. As the star of *Boys Don't Cry* (1999), Swank won an Oscar for her portrayal of *Tyler Durden*, a young Nebraska woman who was murdered for passing herself off as a man. Now in *The Affair of the Necklace*, she plays the 18th-century French courtesan Jeanne de la Motte-Valois, a scam artist who orchestrated a royal fraud, creating a scandal that helped trigger the French Revolution. Through wild distortions, both films are based on true events, and both are about rebels engaged in dangerous romances.

"Obviously there are two extreme roles," says Swank, 27. "You're a girl posing as a boy then your looking to feminize to a man." But she acknowledges that costumes figure prominently in both. "With *Boys*, I strap my bra on and put on those very clothes, and with *The Affair of*

the Necklace, I strap the corset on and my bra is an affair. It's lifted," she laughs. "What's kind of funny is that my bra is as appealing as a life of their own with these corsets I'm doing. They're smoothed down or pushed up. In my next movie they're just normal." In this film, Swank, a thriller by *Melvin van Peebles* *Christopher Nolan*, she plays a rookie detective opposite *Al Pacino* and *Robin Williams*.

The Oscar opened a list of doors for Swank, who lives in Manhattan with her husband, actor Chad Lowe. "I have a huge stack of scripts on my bedside table," she says. But her sudden fame created "added pressure" on her. "I felt there was nowhere to go but down. I felt I was being watched under a microscope. Once I got over that initial feeling, the creativity started to flow again."

This month Swank stars in *Boys Don't Cry*. The *Boys* Oscar again, it's a kind of cinematic drama with a confining wardrobe—she plays in a straitjacket.



Just how does Belafonte fill his day-e?

Letter King Jr., Hilary Kennedy, *Cherise Rose* and, later, *Nelson Mandela*. "We were all committed and not really in struggle," he says. Belafonte's latest project, *The Long Road to*

Freedom: An Anthology of Black Music, is a landmark new battle. The 60-song, two-disc box set is a sequel to recordings Belafonte produced between 1960 and 1971 that are now being reissued for the first time. The music, produced by Belafonte and others such as *Joe Williams* and *Johnny Lyne*, covers 20 years—from the time of slavery to the 20th century.

Need of the homogeneous nature of today's pop music, Belafonte is planning to travel and perform himself in different sounds from Africa, Cuba, Ireland and Jamaica. Belafonte's message is, "Racism is diversity" a sentiment as important as when he first started out.

Struggling from reserve to rink

They were native Canadians, mostly from reserve reserves and towns, who beat the odds, attacked the arena, and made it into the ranks of the National Hockey League. Their tenacious usually addressed them in a "chief" but they were also called "swagon buttard," "squaw humpin'" and, in one columnar wane, member of "hickapoo pay price." *They Call Me Chief* (Global TV, Dec. 19) examines both the native sagas of hockey—moving it to lacrosse—and the social and personal obstacles that have racist a near dozen of native players from professional rinks.

Among the exceptions profiled in the one-hour documentary are trailblazer Fred

Saskatoon, who made it from northern Saskatchewan to the Chicago Blackhawks in 1953 only to return home after 11 years, overwhelmed by loneliness and racism; recently then-tempered Boston forward Sam Jonathan; Conn Smythe Trophy-winner Reg Leach, whose life was saved by alcohol; and current nose heartthrob Sheldon Souray, the Montreal Canadian defenceman who co-founded Saskatoon's Aboriginal Role Model Hockey School to prepare today's young native players for a life on the ice. As phenomials as those it chronicles, *They Call Me Chief* sheds a revealing light on an especially gritty corner of the sport.

Vivian Dwyer



The pelts, and the jokes, fly again

Canadian comic Ron James had some seasonal moments trying to make it in Hollywood back in the early 1990s. How else to describe sitting with Tiny Tim outside a Los Angeles film studio debating whether or not Dave Ron was the greatest actor who ever red on duars for the oddball crooner's beloved Toronto Maple Leafs? For all the witless, though, James big Los Angeles break never came. So by the time he returned to Toronto, the Second City comedy trouper had had enough of sitting around waiting for the phone to ring. "If you're in show business the only choice you have in Canada is to outsmart your own director," says James, 43. "I've been fortunate to be able to do this the last couple of years."

Named comedian of the year at the 2000 Canadian Comedy Awards, James

maintains a punishing cross-country touring schedule with his stand-up show. His two-year run as a performer on CBC's sitcom series *Made in Canada* is over, but he's more than busy writing and starring in *Bladdy*, the historical farce that kicked off its second season on Global Dec. 2. James says he learned a lot from season number 1. "No more better jokes or silly double entendres," vows the Halifax native, who stars as a cunny far trader in 18th-century colonial Canada. Instead he's aiming for broader audience appeal. "We want a show where the 13-year-old is laughing at me going for over the head with a board and the dad is chuckling about the reference to John Locke. James, it seems, wants to prove that frontier Canada can be just as weird as modern-day Hollywood.



Reclaim seek Saskatchewan look home

A delicious dose of toxic plum pudding

Of the many productions of Charles Dicken's *A Christmas Carol* that will hit the boards this holiday season, one of the most anticipated will come from Sci-Fi:paper, the celebrated Toronto-based troupe known for its fresh take on the classics. The company, which recently won Ontario's \$50,000 Lieutenant-Governor Award for its success in staging ghost-story adaptations, will present Dickens' tale of hard heartedness and redemption in a lavish version (Dec. 18 to Jan. 6) replete with all the celebrated top hats and plummy English accents a Victorian Christmas demands. Playing the pretty plucking Scrooge is veteran character actor Joseph Ziegler. Glimped last week in rehearsal, Ziegler delivered the original Dickensian glow with a searing pitch that brought new life to such famous lines as, "Bah! Humbug! Every thing who goes about with Merry Christmas on his lips should be boiled to death with his own plump pudding!" Says Ziegler, "It's hard to achieve Scrooge, he has the courage of his beliefs. He has to say what he thinks, even though he knows nobody likes him for it. And in the end, when the ghosts take him back to what his best, he has the benevolence to sweep over the mistakes he's made. There's a touch of goodness in the man."



An American in the dock

If author Christopher Hitchens has his way, Henry Kissinger may yet be charged with war crimes. In *The Trial of Henry Kissinger* (Penguin, \$32), Hitchens asserts that the former U.S. secretary of state under presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford—and 1973 Nobel Peace Prize co-winner—is responsible for the illegal mass killings of civilians during the Vietnam War, as well as instilling genocide or political racism in such places as Chile, East Timor and Bangladesh. Of ten using official government documents, Hitchens builds a damning paper-fact case. What gives the book its force, however, is the probing state of international law—particularly the precedents established by the arrest of former Chinese dictator Jiang Qing.

A Kissinger trial remains highly improbable, but it's no longer impossible.

Best Sellers

PICKER	PHYSICAL	PHYSICAL
	LAST WEEK	LAST WEEK
1. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	1	1
2. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	2	2
3. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	3	3
4. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	4	4
5. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	5	5
6. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	6	6
7. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	7	7
8. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	8	8
9. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	9	9
10. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	10	10
11. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	11	11
12. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	12	12
13. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	13	13
14. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	14	14
15. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	15	15

Notation

1. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	1
2. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	2
3. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	3
4. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	4
5. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	5
6. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	6
7. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	7
8. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	8
9. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	9
10. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	10
11. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	11
12. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	12
13. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	13
14. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	14
15. <i>THE KISS</i> (Warner Bros.)	15

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Allan Fotheringham

The greying of Dubya

Leaders lead by example. Churchill's penguin: "blood, toil, sweat and tears" pledge to his public stirred Britain's spine. At the 1968 St. Jean Baptiste parade in Montreal, youthful Jean began to haul muscles in the reviewing stand. As national television watched, Mayor Jean Drapeau and all the other bourgeois had to cede Pierre Elliott Trudeau's basketball down alone, defying the chips to hit him with a single rock or beer bottle. The next day an evasive English Canada gave him at the ball's box the first of his three straight Liberal victories.

The Japanese, 60 years ago last week, shocked the United States out of its naive isolation by the sneak attack that destroyed the American naval fleet lying asleep at Pearl Harbor outside Honolulu in beautiful Hawaii. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the pacifist millionaire from a famous family, calmed the American nation with his famed "Fireside chat"—his sly public-relations scene induced by his little dog Duke always at his side.

Teddy, of course, every president tries to emulate the No-nukes Backusell touch. Bill Clinton tried to deflect his juvenile sexual advances in the Oval Office by walking on the lawn to the White House helicopter with modern dog in tow. George W. Bush would no more finger his toothbrush than neglect the mandatory pooch who is dragged by the leash and rock up the steps leading to the chopper hoisted for Camp David. What would a president do without CNN?

Jimmy Carter, as president, tried to emulate FDR, by initiating "town hall" meetings with "ordinary" Americans while wearing a campaign sweater, which succeeded only in making him look silly. We have now moved post-9/11, post-Afghanistan—into a new mode. It is the most powerful man in the world morphing into a rock star, on time, all the time, the new successor to Bernard Shaw at Baghdad. You want art? You get Bushfire! It's fiction. Whether you like it or not.

Dubya Bush cannot be avoided these days. He's more reliable than the postman. Every day when you turn on the telly, he's there, getting more confident each day, more at ease with the microphone, dropping his g's and announcing he wants the evil-doers dead or alive. It's not Churchill and it's not FDR, but you can't avoid him, his newly greying hair appears even when the vacuum cleaner wipes out his voice.



We all know that Malcolm X, that lanky little cat, could never have survived in the cage of television. Marshall McLuhan taught us that TV made Truman, just as it killed Bob Stefanfeld, with his awkward body language the best prime minister Canada never had. Jim Cowan, Trudeau's principal secretary in the 1960s, has since written that he boss would enter the House of Commons as an actor—a different actor—every day, because he knew it was basically entertainment, not politics. One day he would be arrogant. Another day? He would smile, passing off our questions from the Opposition opposite to minor cabinet ministers. Third day? Witty with

poohsya "buddy-buddy"—playing to the complacent Ontario Press Gallery who sit alone, dying for a single quote. It is why Patman Manning, weary of the battle, observes that it is called Question Period, rather than Answer Period, because you never get any answers.

And it is why, of course, that Mister Bush—the most experienced American politician ever to walk into the White House (more Americans who went to the polling box voted against him)—is at the table every day, outlasting even the vacuum cleaners. He is the new Hugo Hafflin of politics waving, instead of that new grumpy TV personality dark girth, the masculinity white shirt and blue single-breasted suit that every Washington politician and lobbyist must wear. (The most rigorous and energetic nation on earth has the most hide-behind uniform for adult males on earth—almost to boring as all those Afghan look-alike men in their turquoise robes and headgear. The scene in any Washington restaurant at noon is similar, in reverse, like being in Kabul.)

Dubya, gaining confidence with the news media, in recent days has moved on from Hafflin to becoming the world's most powerful man transformed into Oprah. In Orlando last week, trying to help brother Jeb retain his Florida governorship (how can you have two brothers named Jeb and Dubya?), he mimed the stage with a hand mule, for all the world resembling a talk-show host. Already we have the strange (though understandable) situation of the underground vice-president Dick Cheney, hidden in a secure cave under the White House in case the big guy gets bumped off by terrorists, while the big guy perfects his talents in talking about the "folks" who are gonna get killed in the oil crises. Nothing is strange anymore.

Illustration by David M. White

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